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**CHURCH GROUP ACTIVITIES  
FOR  
YOUNG MARRIED PEOPLE**



**GEORGE GLEASON**

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# CHURCH GROUP ACTIVITIES

For Young Married People

*By*

GEORGE GLEASON

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*Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Philosophy,  
Columbia University*

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*Published by the Author*  
715 SOUTH HOPE STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

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Price, \$1.00

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## *Acknowledgments*

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Grateful acknowledgment is hereby made to the following whose patient counsel and guidance led to whatever of depth and thoroughness are found in this study:

Of Teachers College and Union Theological Seminary, New York City:

Professor Harrison S. Elliott, *Chairman*

Professor W. C. Hallenbeck, *Adviser*

Professor Floyd B. O'Rear, *Adviser*

Professor Adelaide T. Case

Professor F. Ernest Johnson

Dean Henry Pitney Van Dusen

To the pastors, church officers and members of married people's groups throughout Southern California who generously spent their hours in providing the data and reporting the experiences on which this study is based, warm appreciation is due.

To the University of Southern California for the counsel of professors and library privileges, acknowledgment is hereby made.

GEORGE GLEASON





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# CHURCH GROUP ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG MARRIED PEOPLE

## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. PURPOSE AND PROBLEM

The purpose of this investigation is to collect, analyze and interpret information regarding the young married people's groups in the Protestant churches of Southern California. The specific problem is to discover the procedure by which churches may meet their responsibilities for young married people.

#### 2. MOTIVE FOR THE STUDY

When the writer in 1922 became director of religious work in the Young Men's Christian Association of Los Angeles, he found that the major feature of the work of boys' YMCA secretaries was group activities for boys in churches. Boys' Sunday School classes with a directed week-day recreational program were growing up in more than a hundred church schools. Club leaders were being trained and printed resource materials were being created.

In 1929 the writer began to inquire: After these boys grow up and marry, is there any continuous religious education program for them and their wives? This question asked of local and national religious leaders was almost invariably answered with a "No!" In a few churches, however, in Los Angeles and vicinity, Sunday School classes of married couples, parents' classes and social clubs of young married people were found. Enough experience seemed

available to warrant an exploration into the field of church group activities for young married people. The motive for the study, therefore, was to try to discover whether it is possible to carry on religious education by and for young married people equal in effectiveness to the work with boys, and with as skilled techniques.

### 3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

(1) Southern California was selected for the study. This area, from Bakersfield and Paso Robles to the Mexican border and from the Pacific Ocean to the boundary of Arizona, is three hundred miles long and two hundred miles wide. It includes considerable mountain and desert tracts, and a population in 1930 of 3,044,978.

(2) The study has been confined to Protestant churches. Although Catholic and Jewish educational leaders were consulted, the groups reporting are all found in the Protestant churches.

(3) Only mixed groups of men and women have been studied.

(4) Older groups which were organized many years ago by young married people are included. These original groups of young couples, as they matured, have from year to year attracted other couples of similar age. During more than two decades some of these older groups have accumulated experience which may give guidance to the younger groups. They are, therefore, regarded as an important sector of this study.

(5) This is not another research in marriage and parent education, as many may assume. This false supposition was evidenced as late as November, 1935. In a letter from North Carolina an inquiring friend wrote: "Doctor W. (of New York) tells me that you are attempting to launch a program of education for marriage and family life in a group of California churches." The study is in no sense

confined to these two interests of married couples. It includes the whole field of religious education for groups of young married people in churches, as will become clear in the following pages.

(6) The study is, on the whole, limited to the investigation of groups now in operation. The methods of gathering data did not include an examination of groups that have failed or a search for reasons why young married people in the community were not connected with the existing groups. This is, therefore, a study of the elements which make groups continue, and a critical analysis of the purposes, programs and church relationships of ongoing groups.

(7) The study has been limited to churches in which young married peoples' groups have been found. The data are not available for comparing churches with a special group for young married people with churches where no such organization exists.

(8) No information was secured as to whether members of the church groups belonged to other community organizations, such as the Parent-Teacher Association, and no study was made of these other agencies. There is, therefore, no basis for determining whether the educational inadequacies pointed out in the program of many of the church groups are being met for the members through other community associations.

#### 4. METHOD OF GATHERING THE DATA

Because there were no available lists of young married people's classes, discovering the groups was the first problem. After counseling with thirty-three local YMCA secretaries, with denominational board executives and others, every church was listed in which the existence of a young married group seemed at all probable. In this way about 400 of the 1,149 Southern California English-speaking,

white churches were selected for questioning. Over 200 were called on personally, many of them several times. Approximately 100 more were telephoned, and inquiries by letter and through friends were made concerning 100 other churches. In this process every report of the existence of a young married group was followed up.

Wherever a group was discovered the data sheet (cf. Appendix A) was presented to the church pastor, the church secretary, the director of religious education, or to the teacher, president or secretary of the group. Through a follow-up by personal visits, correspondence and the telephone, 174 data sheets were filled out. Two weeks before the inquiry closed a reply postcard (cf. Appendix B) was mailed to all other known groups. Forty-eight of these were returned. In the above manner reports were gathered from a total of 222 groups in 173 churches. Only nine known classes failed to reply.

Intensive studies of twenty churches were made by personal interviews, in some instances repeated several times. Eleven national denominational and interdenominational agencies were called on, and correspondence was carried on with eight others. One church group in Los Angeles for two years served as a laboratory, where many experiments were made.

## 5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

(1) Recent educational trends outside the church are focusing attention upon young adults, and especially upon the young married group.

a. The rapid growth of adult education suggests new possibilities for the whole adult work of the church. Between 1924 and 1934 it is estimated that enrollment in adult education increased from 14,881,500 to 22,311,000.



Many of the groups were composed almost entirely of young adults.<sup>1</sup>

b. Increasing experience in parent education is revealing the importance of attitudes, emotions and intelligence in parents of young children.<sup>2</sup>

c. Marriage and family counseling clinics, such as the Institute of Family Relations, Los Angeles; The Family Relations Center, San Francisco; and the Family Guidance Service of New York City, are demonstrating the value for future family life of guidance in the periods immediately before and after marriage. There are now in the United States at least 157 marriage advice centers.<sup>3</sup>

d. Some recent findings of educational research point directly to young adults. It is now known not only that adults can learn and acquire new interests,<sup>4</sup> but that the acme of learning ability is between twenty and twenty-five, and that the ages between twenty-five and forty-five are superior in learning capacity to childhood. Young adults, therefore, are at the peak of learning possibilities.<sup>5</sup> From the point of view of educational ability they form the most important group in the church.

e. Two assumptions of progressive education also center attention upon young adults. The first is that education should be a continuous process.<sup>6</sup> To realize this goal in practical life it is important that young adults, who have

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1. Cartwright, Morse Adams, *Ten Years of Adult Education*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1935, p. 60.

2. Woodward, Luther Ellis, *Relation of Religious Training and Life Patterns to the Adult Religious Life*. Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, No. 527, pp. 46-48.

3. *American Journal of Public Health and the Nation's Health*, Vol. 25, No. 3, March, 1935, p. 354.

4. Thorndike, E. L., *Adult Interests*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1935, pp. 15-18.

5. Thorndike, E. L., *Adult Learning*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1928, pp. 106, 133, 147, 177.

6. Lindeman, Eduard C., *The Meaning of Adult Education*. New York, New Republic, 1926, pp. 6-9.

just emerged from the period of organized education in high school and college, should form the habit of uninterrupted educational growth.

A second assumption is that the most significant time for learning is when the student is seeking a pertinent answer to some quest.<sup>1</sup> As young married people are seeking immediate solutions to numerous marriage, home, child, vocational, recreational and other problems, they are in a most significant learning period. In the years following marriage, there may be more acute decisions to be made, and hence more learning opportunities, than at any other period of life.

f. Our inability to cope with the recent depression has increased the conviction that general information and the capacity to make intelligent decisions must be greatly increased if democracy is to be preserved and extended. Democracy assumes that there will be a sufficient number of intelligent adults to guide elections in desirable directions. Because social and economic conditions are in rapid flux, adults can keep informed on public affairs only by continuous education. In this critical process young adults cannot be overlooked.

g. Adult education seeks to occupy the increasing leisure, which, due to shorter hours of work, and smaller families, leaves more and more time for education. Whereas only a few decades ago securing food, clothing and shelter for an ever growing family taxed the producing capacity of young homemakers, technological advances and the results of birth control practices are providing abundant leisure for educational and cultural growth.

(2) The study is in a field the neglect of which religious educators are beginning to sense. The International Coun-

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1. Kilpatrick, William H., "Objectives for Curriculum and Method," *Journal of the National Education Association*, Vol. 25, No. 5, May, 1936, p. 137.

cil of Religious Education, in a recent publication, recognizes that the program of religious education for adults is usually planned for middle-aged persons. But young adults "seem loath to mingle with the older people."<sup>1</sup> Professor Vieth of Yale, writing on "Trends in Adult Work in the Church," says:

The younger adults are at present the No Man's Land of our churches. There is a vast gap between the young people's society and the active adult groups in the church. Yet this is just the group which needs the church most. They are the ones who are launching out on new adventures of home building and entering business and professions.<sup>2</sup>

(3) The study deals with an aspect of religious education which is fundamental to church growth. The history of the groups indicates that if in the early years of their married life young people remain loyal to the church, they usually continue without a break to support the church and its program of community and world service. In a very few years many of them become church officers and Sunday School teachers, and their children are found in the church school.

A minister's wife in Colorado, who for several years has led a young married people's class in two different parishes, recently wrote: "I am very enthusiastic over Y.M.P. groups and feel that *on them depends the future of the church.*"<sup>3</sup>

(4) From this study signs appear that a new emphasis in church work is emerging. In all the groups of young married people the fellowship aspects of their activities are well developed. The group meetings seem to have a stronger

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1. *International Curriculum Guide, Book Four, Christian Education of Adults*, Part One, p. 125.

2. Vieth, Paul H., *International Journal of Religious Education*, October, 1935, p. 36.

3. In a personal letter to the writer.

appeal than the church mass assemblies. This appears both in the groups observed and in reports from other sections of the country.<sup>1</sup> This attractiveness of group membership suggests the possibility that the center of gravity of the church is changing from emphasis on large "services" or meetings to emphasis on small fellowship groups, all integrated in the total fellowship of the church.<sup>2</sup>

- 
1. Cf. Lynd, R. S. and H. M., *Middletown: A Study in Contemporary American Culture*. New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929, p. 383.  
*They Went Away*. Leaflet, No. 425 B, Nashville, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, May, 1936.
  2. This problem is further discussed in Chapter VIII.

## Chapter II

# STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE 222 GROUPS STUDIED

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In Chapter I the purpose, motive, method, scope and significance of this study were outlined. Young adulthood was found to be a neglected area in American church life. Upon this sector of the population many religious, educational and social trends are focusing attention. We now turn to a statistical analysis of the 222 groups from which reports were gathered. This should give a background for the later discussion of their purpose, program and place in the church structure.

The question may arise as to why so many of these groups have emerged in Southern California. Do they exist in similar numbers in other parts of the country? If they do, they are not known. One adult religious education leader in the East replied to a request for a list of such classes: "I do not know of a single group in our denomination of the type you mention." During two winters spent in New York City the writer was able to locate few groups other than parent classes, which were composed largely of mothers. In a recent study made in Chicago, ninety-six selected churches were questioned, but only twenty-eight young adult groups could be located, scattered through twelve different states. Of these only nine were composed of young married people.<sup>1</sup> In three automobile trips across the continent, and through correspondence, the writer has been able to

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1. Bischoff, Albertine D., *Case Studies of Young Adult Groups Organized for Religious Education*. Thesis in the Library of the Presbyterian College of Christian Education, Chicago, 1934, p. 7.

collect a list of only sixty-two young married groups outside of California.

Were an intensive search made in any area of the country many groups would doubtless be uncovered. But the social climate of Southern California seems especially congenial to such experimentation. It is a young and increasing community. Between 1900 and 1930 the population of this half of the state grew from 337,000 to over three millions. The oil developments since 1900, the growth of the fruit and movie industries, together with a smiling climate, have brought to Southern California a steady flow of new residents. New families, socially unintegrated, many of whose members had previously found their social fellowship in Protestant churches, were moving into each locality. New churches were being formed. Old churches were growing. Such a scene set the stage for these new groupings.

## 2. FOUR TYPES OF GROUPS

By a "group" is meant an association of persons who affiliate for some purpose and who collectively seek to realize their objectives over a period of time.

What is a *young married people's group*? It is, first of all, a group which is attracting and holding in its membership young or recently married couples. In this study it does not include, as some replies to the questionnaire assumed, mothers' clubs, Christian Endeavor societies with high school members, or heterogeneous mixed adult groups. Nor is a group always young simply because it bears the name. In a few churches, which thought they had a young married class, the group contained few, if any, young couples. The members may have once been young, but they could no longer be so described.

A criterion, therefore, for defining a young married people's group was sought. In thirty churches a young group had been formed as the first grew older. In harmony

with these thirty instances of group grading, a criterion, growing out of actual experience, was found. In these thirty young groups the youngest members ranged from eighteen to twenty-five and the oldest from twenty-six to forty. Also, the average duration of marriage of members at the time of the study ranged from one to nine years.<sup>1</sup> Conforming, therefore, to this church experience, a group in this study is labeled *young* if it fulfills three conditions: The average duration of marriage of members must be not over nine years, the oldest member must be not over forty, and there must be in the group some members under twenty-five years of age. In the list in Appendix E, with one or two exceptions, all the groups reported as young fulfill these conditions.

Where to place groups with a few unmarried members was the next problem. They could not be omitted, because they were reported as programmed primarily for married couples. As no precedent could be found, all reporting groups with a majority of married members were included in the study. But those groups in which the number of unmarried members included more than twenty per cent of the membership were listed as *young adults*. Those with less than twenty per cent unmarried were listed in the married groups.

The groups were again divided into *classes* which have a Sunday program, and *clubs*, which have only a week-day, predominantly social, program.

With the method of classification outlined above, four types of groups emerged.

(1) *Young Adult Classes*, which have a majority of married members, but more than twenty per cent unmarried. There are eleven of these.

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1. By "duration of marriage" is meant the length of time a couple has been married.

- (2) *Young Married People's Classes*, which have:
- a. A Sunday religious education program.
  - b. Members, the youngest of whom is not over twenty-five, and the oldest not over forty years of age.
  - c. Couples whose average duration of marriage is not over nine years.
  - d. Not over twenty per cent of unmarried persons in the class.

There are ninety-four of these.

(3) *Older Married People's Classes*, which were started by young married couples but whose members are now of an age range or length of marriage above the young group. These are found in the following grades:

- a. *Second Older Married People's Classes*, of which there are eighty-three.
- b. *Third Older Married People's Classes*, where there are now in the church two younger groups. There are ten of these.
- c. *Fourth Older Married People's Classes*, where there are now in the church three younger groups. There are six of these.
- d. *Fifth Older Married People's Classes*, where there are now in the church four younger groups. There are three of these.

Each of the above started as a *young married people's* group.

(4) *Social Clubs*, which usually meet monthly, primarily for a social evening, but which have, as a group, no Sunday program. These clubs are made up of either the Young or Second Older married couples. Their membership does not include any of the unmarried. These number fifteen.



### 3. DISTRIBUTION OF GROUPS BY DENOMINATIONS AND TYPES

There are 1,149 Protestant white churches in Southern California among which groups were sought. In 173 churches 222 groups were located. Most of these were found in five denominations. Table 1 on the following page gives their location by age and activity types and by denominations.

For those interested in the denominational aspects of the distribution the following points in Table 1 are of special interest:

(1) The distribution of groups in proportion to number of churches is in the following order:

Disciples of Christ—	1 group to every	3.1 churches
Methodist Episcopal—	1 group to every	3.6 churches
Baptist—	1 group to every	3.8 churches
Presbyterian—	1 group to every	4 churches
Congregationalist—	1 group to every	6.2 churches
Others—	1 group to every	13.2 churches

(2) Most of the Social Clubs are found in the Congregational and Presbyterian churches.

(3) The Disciples of Christ and Congregational denominations are stronger in the Second Older than in the Young Married People's section.

(4) The groups above the Second Older are found only among the Baptists and Methodists (and Friends, as will be seen in Appendix E).

(5) The Protestant Episcopal Church does not appear among the denominations having a large number of groups. Only one group in this denomination could be located. This is reported in Appendix E.

## Distribution of Groups by Denominations and Types

TABLE 1

Denomination	No. of Churches in So. Calif. (a)	No. of Churches Reporting	Total Groups Reported	Young Adult Classes	MARRIED PEOPLE'S CLASSES				
					Young	2nd Older	3rd Older	4th Older	5th Older Social Clubs
Baptist	139	29	37	2	20	11	2	1	0
Disciples of Christ	114	32	37	1	17	19	0	0	0
Congregational	100	16	16	1	2	6	0	0	7
Methodist Episcopal	253	44	70	1	30	25	7	4	2
Presbyterian	119	26	30	4	12	9	0	0	5
Denominations with few groups	424 <sup>(b)</sup>	26	32	2	13	13	1	1	1
Totals	1,149	173	222	11	94	83	10	6	3

In addition to the above, thirty-four groups were reported as being planned or in process of formation, and nine known groups failed to send reports.

(a) The following churches have not been included: Negro, Mexican, Oriental, and a few using European languages.

(b) This includes 128 Protestant Episcopal churches, 196 in fourteen smaller denominations cooperating in the State Church Council, and 100 Foursquare Gospel churches (founded by Aimee Semple McPherson).

#### 4. DISTRIBUTION BY SIZE OF CHURCHES AND COMMUNITIES

The 222 groups are located in 173 churches ranging in membership from seventy to 4,528, and in towns and cities ranging in population from 200 to 1,250,000. The membership of the median church is 650, and the population of the median town is 35,000. This means that there are as many groups in churches of over 650 members as there are in churches of less than 650 members; and that there are as many groups in towns of over 35,000 population as there are in towns of less than 35,000.

#### 5. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE GROUPS ON THREE AGE LEVELS

Table 2 gives facts against which a group may check to discover how far it is above or below the average of groups reporting in this study. In this table Young Adults are included in the Young section, and the Social Clubs are included in the section where each belongs, according to the members' age range. Because not every group reported all the items asked for on the 174 data sheets received, and because only a limited number of items were asked for on the forty-eight postcard reports received, the number of groups reporting each item is enclosed in parentheses.

Statistical Analysis of the Groups  
on Three Age Levels

TABLE 2<sup>1</sup>

Item	Young Groups	Second Older Groups	Combined 3d, 4th, & 5th Older Groups
Total number of groups	115	88	19
Av. number of years since formation	(115) 3.6 (84)	7.5 (19)	17.8
Av. number of years members have been married	(108) 5.6 (78)	11.6 (19)	22.1
Av. age range of members	(115) 22-35.4 (88)	27-45.4 (19)	38.2-57
Av. number of members	(115) 42.1 (87)	70.9 (19)	124.6
Av. number of men	(113) 19 (87)	31.7 (19)	62
Av. number of women	(113) 23.7 (87)	39.2 (19)	62.6
Av. number of members not married	(112) 3 (80)	1.5 (17)	0.6
Av. number of members not members of the church	(82) 11.2 (67)	18.2 (12)	15.3
Av. attendance at Sunday meetings of Group	(102) 20 (83)	32.4 (19)	50
Av. attendance at Social meetings of Group	(103) 29.2 (80)	44 (18)	69
Av. number of families without children	(82) 6.4 (66)	6 (10)	8

In Table 2 the following items are of special significance:

(1) The large number of groups are in the Young and Second Older sections—115 and 88 respectively.

(2) The average number of years since formation is 3.6 for the Young and 7.5 for the Second Older. This suggests the answer to the question: When should a Young group consider changing to a Second Older? Half way between these points is the average. Thus after a Young group has been organized for five or more years it might wisely begin to consider whether it is time to move up in the adult department and to organize a new younger group.

(3) The average number of members increases with

1. Wherever "average" is used in this table or in other connections it always refers to the arithmetic mean not to the median.

the age of the groups—42.1 for the Young, 70.9 for the Second Older, and 124.6 for the nineteen still older groups. Is such a large membership desirable? Or would it be better in some congenial way to divide the groups as they mature? These are questions which might be asked in a specific situation.

(4) The average number of unmarried members, 3, 1.5, 0.6, indicates that these groups are distinctly for married couples. Of 222 groups, unmarried members were reported in seventy-eight. (Appendix E.) This raises the question of the place in the church program for the older unmarried young people. This is discussed in Chapter VIII.

(5) In the Young and Second Older sections more than twenty-five per cent of the group members are not members of the church. This is evidence that the groups are serving a considerable clientele beyond the church's membership list. In the sense that they are bringing into the church unchurched people, these groups are evangelistic in their influence.

(6) A comparison of the attendance at the Sunday meetings and at the socials reveals an appreciably larger number at the social gatherings. This increase averages 9.2 for the Young, 11.6 for the Second Older and 19 for the other older groups. At first glance, therefore, the socials appear much more attractive than the Sunday meetings. But when it is remembered that an average of 6.2 members are teaching in the Sunday School, (cf. p. 89) and, therefore, must be absent from the Sunday class, and that visitors are frequently invited to the socials as a first step toward joining the group, the larger attendance at socials does not appear so significant.

(7) Finding in the respective age sections an average of 6.4, 6, and 8 families without children suggests that these are not primarily parents' classes. Parent education, therefore, should not be the only purpose of the groups.

## 6. DIVISION OF MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP BETWEEN THE SEXES

As membership in the groups is open to married people, among members are widows, widowers, divorcees and even husbands and wives whose mates have not joined the group. And since women are usually more loyal to the church than men, it was expected that they would be in the majority. In some instances, however, there is a predominance of men. The data in Table 3 show that in membership and in attendance at meetings, women outnumber men by a small percentage. The group officers, however, are more nearly equally divided. But nearly eighty per cent of the presidents have been men.

### Division of Membership and Leadership Between the Sexes

Table 3

Item	No. Groups Reporting	Number	Percentage
Total membership .....	221	13,368	100
men .....	221	6,078	45.5
women .....	221	7,290	54.5
Total number of officers.....	166	709	100
men .....	166	328	46.3
women .....	166	381	53.7
Total number of presidents the groups have had.....	166	999	100
men presidents.....	166	788	78.9
Average attendance at Sunday meetings	214	26.1	100
men .....	152	10.7 <sup>1</sup>	41.1
women .....	152	15.4 <sup>1</sup>	58.9
Average attendance at social meetings....	201	38.6	100
men .....	154	18 <sup>1</sup>	46.6
women .....	154	20.6 <sup>1</sup>	53.4
Number of groups which reported a special men's activity.....		10	
Number of groups which reported a special women's activity.....		47	

Table 3 indicates that these married groups are proving

1. These figures were not given in the data sheets. They are approximates based on the percentages in the column to the right.

one solution for the problem of bringing men into the church. So-called parents' classes do not, as a rule, interest large numbers of men. They are largely mothers' groups. In this study only two "parents' classes" of men and women were found.<sup>1</sup> While both of these groups had superior leadership the average attendance of men at the Sunday meetings was in one case thirty-three and in the other thirty per cent of the total attendance. But the average attendance of men in all groups was forty-one per cent.

Herein may lie an important suggestion for churches at this time when expansion of parent education is being so widely advocated. If it is desired to bring men into this program, instead of forming special parent study groups, it may be wiser to organize married couples' groups with a varied curriculum, into which can be injected periodically the desired parent education activities.

#### 7. DETAILED LIST OF 222 GROUPS

In Appendix E is a complete list of the groups reporting, with name, type and a brief statistical description of each. The arrangement is in the following order:

- (1) By denominations
- (2) By churches having two or more groups
- (3) Alphabetically, by towns and cities

#### 8. SUMMARY

In Table 1, of 1,149 churches only 173, or fifteen per cent, reported groups. This means that in about eighty-five per cent of the Southern California English-speaking, white churches no adequate group activity for their young married clientele could be discovered. This again reinforces the opinions expressed in Chapter I that this is the unharvested section of the American church field.

1. In the Pasadena Presbyterian Church and the Pasadena First Methodist Church. (A third was organized in this M.E. Church shortly before the study closed and is included in Appendix E.)

On the other hand a type of organization which, without denominational or interdenominational promotion, sprang up 222 times in one small section of the country, and which has a history of twenty-eight years, should be regarded as of great significance in religious education.

The distribution of groups among small and large churches, and in communities of various populations, suggests that the membership total of the church, or the population of the community, is not necessarily a factor in determining whether a group can be organized in a specific church.

There are four types of groups: Young Adult Classes, Young Married People's Classes, Older Married People's Classes (in four age sections), and Social Clubs.

Forty years of age, with a length of marriage of nine years, is the average upper age limit of the Young groups.

Men in goodly numbers are joining and officering the groups. But the proportion of men attending so-called "parents' classes" is less than that found in the other groups.

The groups are attracting non-church members into membership.

There is no instance of graduation or promotion from one group to another. In many instances a younger group set an upper age limit. When, however, a member reached the moving out age invariably the limit was extended. "Once a member always a member" is the practice. The group as a body moves up in the adult department of the church when a younger group is formed. In the Chicago study of twenty-eight young adult groups the same universal practice of group continuity was observed.<sup>1</sup> Thus in a few churches in Southern California a crude age grading of the married groups in the adult department is taking place.

1. Bischoff, Albertine D., *Case Studies of Young Adult Groups Organized for Religious Education*. Thesis in the Library of the Presbyterian College of Christian Education, Chicago, 1934, p. 67.



## Chapter III

### WHAT STARTED THE GROUPS?

What has caused the emergence in the Southern California church scene of groups of young married couples?

#### 1. OBSERVED ORIGINS

##### (1) *A Spontaneous Demand*

There has been a spontaneous demand from young couples themselves for a special group of their own kind—a group of similar age, of similar length of marriage and of similar intellectual and cultural status.

One of the first groups, organized in 1908, emerged from a young people's class in the Santa Ana First Methodist Church. Four newly married couples felt that they had interests different from the unmarried. They had taken, one of them said, "a step beyond that class." They therefore formed the Young Married People's Class. For twenty-eight years this group has had a continuous existence. The Friendly Circle Class, as it is now called, has a membership of 140. Following its precedent, new groups of young married people were started in this church in 1913, 1922, 1930 and 1935. These five married classes are all still functioning.

In 1914 in the Whittier Methodist Church five young wives were members of the church school but their husbands did not attend. These young women asked the Sunday School superintendent if something could not be done for their husbands. He talked the matter over with two of the men. A few weeks later the Two-In-One Class of young couples was organized. Three other similar groups have followed in this church.

In 1930 three young couples moved into the Los Angeles Wilshire Boulevard Christian Church. They had been mem-

bers of a young married people's class in another church. The six young people went to the pastor and asked his help in securing a suitable teacher for their group. On the fifth anniversary of the founding of the class ninety-four were present at the Sunday meeting and, including guests, 159 sat down together at the Founders' Banquet.

In the Los Angeles First Congregational Church, in the fall of 1933, the Junior Guild, composed of young married women, was meeting in the church, partly for social fellowship and partly for an educational program. Some of the wives proposed that they should have a meeting of husbands and wives together and secure a leader for their discussions. The Young Married People's Round Table resulted. This group of thirty members, all of whom have a college education or its equivalent, for three years has carried on a program of unusual intellectual richness. "Our teacher," said one of the members, "being an up-to-date reader, has been able to recommend and review the best recent books. Having been out of college three to ten years we were falling behind in our knowledge of what was going on in the world."

### *(2) Initiative Taken by Local Church Leaders*

Another early group, organized in 1908, was formed in the Whittier Friends Church. One of the Sunday School workers sensed that the other classes in the church were either too old or too young to be attractive to the younger married people. He, therefore, invited several couples to meet at his home. A new group resulted which has continued up to the present, and which was the forerunner of four other similar groups in that church.

In March, 1925, the pastor of the Oneonta Community Congregational Church invited twenty young couples, apparently unintegrated in any community group, to meet at the parsonage. The Two-By-Two Club resulted, which has been meeting monthly for eleven years.

A church worker in 1923 organized The Parents' Class of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church by calling together a group of five mothers who had been watching their children in the beginners' department. The fathers were soon invited to join. The class has grown to more than a hundred members.

The pastor of the Atascadero Community Church, in November, 1934, invited nine couples to consider the organization of a young married people's society with a religious, cultural and social program. The Two-By-Two Fellowship was formed. It meets by the open fire in the manse sitting room on Sunday evenings. The attendance has averaged twenty, while the monthly socials attract half as many more.

Several other instances of pastor initiated groups have been found. But there is no evidence of promotion by any denominational or interdenominational leader. On the contrary, in two cases, such leaders were reported as opposing mixed married groups.

### (3) *The Factor of Imitation*

As already intimated, imitation has been a large factor in the development of new groups. Five Schooner Clubs (cf. Appendix E) followed the lead of the Presbyterian Church at Wilmington, a part of the port of Los Angeles. The new pastor of the church, who had been in the navy during the war, saw that the church young people were sea-minded. He, therefore, proposed that the young couples "sail out on the sea of life in the good ship Matrimony with Christ as the Pilot and the Bible as the Compass." The Schooner Club movement was on its way. The five other clubs, like the parent organization, seek to maintain "happy decks," by congenial social life; to make a "safe voyage and avoid shipwreck," through education in marriage and home life; and to "carry a cargo," by engaging in church and community service.

Auto parties of young couples have been known to visit churches to suggest groups modeled on their own patterns. Also, members of groups moving to other communities have helped to create new imitative societies.

## 2. THE SWARMING OFF URGE

Evidence has accumulated showing the desire of young married people to belong to a group of their own kind. In a Sunday morning discussion with a group of young couples, the following remarks were made:

I know a class of young people which broke up because half the class got married and didn't come to church any more.

As soon as you are married the church tries to make everybody into a Sunday School Teacher or a boys' club leader. You are not ready for it yet. You want your own group.

In a personal letter to the writer a young bride wrote: Soon after our marriage, my husband and I settled in ——. We soon joined one of the larger churches there, and attended several times. However, no invitation was ever extended to us to become members of a group of our age, and our interest in the church was lost. In fact, other than a few printed notices sent us, and one call from a member regarding our possible contributions for the coming year, we might never have known that we had joined the church.

From another similar letter:

My husband and I went to —, in August, 1934. As both of us had been brought up among people to whom religion was a vital factor in every day life, one of our first wishes was to find a church where we could worship and work with congenial people. After several tries we found a church where there were organizations such as guilds for the church women, discussion groups for the men, and even mixed social groups for the university students. But for the young men and women who wanted, as did my husband and I, to work together, there did not seem to be a group provided. We were young and ready to go, ready to help things move briskly, and there was no

group or church where our united efforts seemed to be wanted. It seems to me there should be such a group established in every church; ready to help young couples who are enthusiastic, and to teach them how to work together for the church.

This desire to join a group of their own kind seems to have two causes:

(1) *A Sense of Separateness from Unmarried Young People*

In speaking of an unsuccessful attempt to combine in one group both married and unmarried, an experienced class teacher remarked: "I have never seen a class like this a success. Married couples always drop out."<sup>1</sup> Some reasons why young couples like to be grouped by themselves are:

a. At marriage their social interests and needs almost immediately change. In the first place, they are no longer in the "hunting" period. Some of the satisfactions which unmarried young people find in late night engagements young couples experience at home. "At 9:30 I used to pray that they would leave," said a young bride of her unmarried visitors.<sup>2</sup>

In the second place, while desire for fellowship with people of the opposite sex still remains after marriage, it should be channeled in different ways than before marriage. This need of married people for many friends of both sexes has been described by an anonymous writer as the loneliness of married life. Marriage, she says, builds a wall between the married person and the world.<sup>3</sup> In the married group this wall is broken down. Intersex friendships seem to be normal when married couples associate

1. Remarks to the writer by a woman who, with her husband, has been leading a group for ten years.
2. Said to the writer at a conference with members of a recently formed group.
3. Anonymous, "Monogamy As An Art," *Forum and Century*, Vol. 95, No. 5, May, 1936, pp. 268-270.

with other married couples. Although the above writer and Bertrand Russell<sup>1</sup> are advocating that outlets for these normal desires be sought in intimacies which are socially frowned upon, this study indicates that adequate satisfactions are available in the congenial couple-with-couple friendships of the married groups. Informal and intimate comradeship seems almost universal in the groups studied. But not a single case of unfortunate or criticized intimacy has emerged.

b. At marriage financial problems are different. Young couples are interested, as a young bride said, "in the accumulations of a home." Those who are limited financially cannot afford to spend on social affairs as generously as their unmarried friends. They prefer to save for a new piece of household equipment.<sup>2</sup>

c. In their marital adjustments, or when the first child is on the way, young couples face domestic and educational problems quite different from those of unmarried young people. Men and women in married groups have indicated little embarrassment in considering many aspects of marriage and parenthood. These topics, they have said, could not have been discussed as freely had their unmarried friends been present.<sup>3</sup>

The leader in a recent experiment in the mid-west with a young adult church group reports that the discussion method used "did not lend itself to the exposure of such problem types as marital conflicts, sex adjustments, personality difficulties, etc."<sup>4</sup> The presence of unmarried persons in the group may have been the cause of the reticence suggested.

1. Russell, Bertrand, "Our Sexual Ethics," *The American Mercury*, Vol. 38, May, 1936, pp. 36-41.

2. Said to the writer at a conference with a small group of young couples.

3. Said to the writer by the president of a group organized five years previously.

4. Charters, Jessie A., *Young Adults and the Church*, New York, The Abingdon Press, 1936, p. 80.

## (2) *Unwillingness to Join Older Married Groups*

Young married people seem to avoid membership in groups of older married couples. Just where lies the dividing line between the young and the older groups was discussed in Chapter II. Instances have repeatedly arisen where young couples directed into older church groups have fled both the group and the church. Reasons for this appear to be:

a. Older people tend to monopolize discussion and leadership. "They like to wrangle," said an observant director of religious education in a Los Angeles church. Younger people are more eager for the essential, for what bears on their many life problems. In theological or Biblical matters unrelated to life, they do not take the same interest as older people.

b. The opinions of older people are more settled. They may frown upon the inquiries which younger people like to make.

c. The problems of young couples are different. Not only are the home and child situations dissimilar, even if older couples have a young child, but in vocational concerns they may be wide apart. Young husbands and some young wives are struggling to succeed in their chosen occupation or to discover a more suitable life work. Older people are usually more advanced in this regard.

Problems of personality adjustment are different. In the first months of married life, what Paul Popenoe, director of the Los Angeles Institute of Family Relations, calls "the battle of the two egos," is taking place.<sup>1</sup> Opinion clashes, habit adjustments in the home and in recreation, different points of view of endless variety cause many struggles between young husbands and wives before com-

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1. Popenoe, Paul, "Can the Family Have Two Heads?" *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol. 18, No. 1, Sept. and Oct., 1933, pp. 12-17.

promise or adaptation result. In later married life these adjustments should have been made.

These and other differences in problems and experiences account for the desire on the part of young married people for membership in a group of like kind, especially of similar chronological and married age. This conclusion is confirmed by another recent study of young adults. Nine of the twenty-eight young adult classes reporting in the Chicago study were said to have started because the other groups in the church were considered either too old or too young.<sup>1</sup>

This sense of separateness from both the older married groups and from their unmarried friends of the same age cannot be too strongly emphasized. Even when the young married couples may be studying the same topic as the other groups mentioned, their point of view and the aspects of the topic in which they take interest may be different. Different also will be the subjects of conversation before and after the class. Social recreation features of the group will be different. If, furthermore, the class curriculum is selected to meet their vital interests this, too, will include topics of a different nature from those of the other groups. This problem is further discussed in Chapter VII.

### 3. MOTIVES REPORTED BY 157 GROUPS

Each person who filled out the data sheet was asked to rank the motives which led to the formation of his group. Seven possible motives were listed. Many others might have been added. In studying Table 4, it must be recognized that motive is an elusive thing. It lies behind the scenes. It is the inner moving cause. It is concerned with the satisfactions contemplated. A motive cannot be seen, it can only be

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1. Bischoff, Albertine D., *Case Studies of Young Adult Groups Organized for Religious Education*. Thesis in the Library of the Presbyterian College of Christian Education, Chicago, 1934, p. 46.



guessed by watching specific behavior. Hence the table is only the record of 157 opinions regarding the seven stated motives.

On all but seventeen of the 174 data sheets received, a rank was given to some or all of the seven motives. The motive which in the opinion of the person who filled out the sheet was of greatest weight was ranked one, of next weight two, etc. In scoring these items a rank of one was given a score of seven, a rank of two, a score of six, etc., and a rank of seven a score of one. An item not ranked was given a zero. Scored in this manner the order of motives with the score of each in order of importance is as follows:

Motives Leading to Forming of the Groups, Arranged  
In Order of Total Score

Table 4

Total Score	Rank	Motive
861	1	To teach the Bible.
802	2	To meet the need for social life and recreation.
706	3	To discuss practical problems of daily life.
553	4	To add new members to the church.
333	5	To discuss problems relating to economics and the social order.
319	6	To meet the need for education in marriage relations and parenthood.
159	7	To help settle theological problems.

In tabulating the above, separate scores were kept for the eighty Young, the sixty-four Second Older and the thirteen Third, Fourth, and Fifth Older Groups. In each of these three age sections the order of rank was exactly the same. This gives a picture, therefore, of what young and old agree has been the hierarchy of motives in the forming of their groups. It is an important revelation of this study.

Bible teaching heads the list. This doubtless was placed first partly from a sense of duty, because the groups are usually a part of the Bible School or the Sunday School, and partly from the momentum of child habits formed in the church school. Or it may be an expression by many of a genuine faith in the Bible as a guide to living. It is known, however, that some group members do not at first want Bible teaching. When a class of college graduates was forming, one of the prospective members was reported to have said: "We do not know what we want, but one thing I know we do not want and that is Bible study."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, in teaching a group for two years the writer discovered a surprising eagerness for Bible study. When practical problems of recreation, marriage, home, children, or social change were discussed for many weeks, invariably there was a complaint from some class members that more Bible teaching was wanted.

From a study of the foregoing table, from a study of group records, and from personal observation of the groups, the writer concludes that the first motive is to meet the need for social life and recreation. Young married couples long for congenial social fellowship. But they also seek a solution for their practical problems in the light of a philosophy of life which many of them hope in some vague way to find in the Bible. These three motives, then, of friendship, problem solution and Bible interpretation have been a strong incentive in forming the groups.

To add new members to the church is the median motive. This is the motive which probably is a strong urge with pastors and church leaders.

At the bottom of the scale lies the discussion of theological problems. This seems to be its true place in the interests of young homemakers. They have so many practical crises

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1. Told to the writer by a church director of religious education.

to face that they have little time for the controversies of theology.

But in both the older and the younger groups, more than 200 score points below the median motive are put the interests in economics and the social order. Many organizers of these classes seem blissfully ignorant that the world is in the midst of a profound social revolution, the outcome of which will be of intimate concern to every family in the group. If the church is to generate the dynamic for social guidance, as many of its leaders assume, a group at the peak of learning capacity cannot relegate to an insignificant position the study of what is now one of the most critical problems of humanity.

Again, while consideration of practical problems of daily life was placed near the top of the list, the most practical problem for these young couples, marriage relations and parenthood, was put next to the bottom. This suggests a vagueness in applying religion to life. In a hazy way, organizers think the purpose of the class is to discuss general life problems, but on the whole they neglect the most pressing specific problems of their members, such as earning a living in the present industrial order, adjustment of the personalities of husband and wife in the home, preparation for the coming of children, the training of children in the home and the education of children in the schools. Excepting the satisfaction of friendship needs, therefore, the deepest wants of the members are largely overlooked. Evidence of this oversight will again appear in the study of program emphasis in the following chapter.

#### 4. SUMMARY

The chief motive for the creation of groups of young married people in the churches of Southern California has been the satisfaction of the hunger for friendship through membership in a group of their own kind. These young

people have spontaneously organized such groups. They have an urge to swarm off from the young people's group, and they are not ready to join a middle-aged group. They have a sense of separateness both from the unmarried and the older married.

In addition to having this fellowship motive the members seem to believe that in some way their life problems can be solved by a study of the Bible. While they aim to build up the church, the groups show little purpose to come to grips with the most pressing issues their members face—marriage, home and the problems of social change.

Judged by the criteria of (1) a vacancy to be filled, (2) spontaneity of origin, (3) growth by imitation, (4) continuous existence without professional promotion, (5) support by local church leaders, (6) aim to build up the church, and (7) aim to integrate life around the knowledge of the Bible, these groups of young married couples of similar age range have met a need in the lives of their members and in the programs of their churches.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Other criteria by which a group's purpose may be tested are discussed in Chapter VII.

## Chapter IV

### PROGRAM EMPHASIS IN THE GROUPS

In the previous chapter a study was made of motives which led to the formation of the groups. We now turn to the question frequently asked: After the groups are organized what do they do? What activities do they consider most important? An answer to this will be sought in their form of organization, in a table giving their program emphasis, and in case studies of group undertakings.

#### 1. PROGRAM EMPHASIS FOUND IN FORM OF ORGANIZATION AND COMMITTEES

Most of the groups are organized with a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, and committees appointed by the president. These serve for either six months or one year. The offices are about equally divided between men and women. In five groups, however, each office is shared by husband and wife. "The president is Mr. and Mrs. ———," was the report. The offices and committee chairmanships are held by a couple. By this procedure husband and wife supplement each other, both in talent and in time. This also gives twice as many members an opportunity to share responsibility and to develop leadership ability.

The groups seem adverse to much formality of organization. Few reported having any written rules of procedure. In the early meetings of one group, considerable time was spent in discussing the constitution and by-laws. But the members found little sustained interest in parliamentary

law.<sup>1</sup> Another small class takes pride in having "no constitution, no officers and no formally appointed committees." Said one of the older members: "Organization bores me to tears. I am willing to work but not to pound the table or 'rise to a point of order.' Our minister says that organization hinders creativity."<sup>2</sup> All the groups visited seemed far more interested in discovering a workable program than in interpreting a constitution or conforming to precedent. This is a refreshing contrast to the writer's experiences with an older churchmen's organization where at business meetings there was much wrangling over interpretations and revisions of the constitution.

The activities of the groups are revealed in the sixty-five committees listed in Table 5. Although there is overlapping in function, the list is given as reported on the data sheets. It indicates great variety of program.

The committees are arranged in three sections:

- (1) Committees concerned with the social and fellowship aspects of the program
- (2) Committees concerned with the educational and spiritual aspects of the program
- (3) Committees assuming general responsibilities

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1. The Two-by-Two Club of the Oneonta Community Congregational Church.

2. In the Mount Hollywood Congregational Church. But informally selected leaders take the place of officers and committees.

## COMMITTEES REPORTED BY 144 GROUPS

TABLE 5

(1) Committees concerned with the social and fellowship aspects of the program:

Name of Committee	No. of Groups Reporting	Name of Committee	No. of Groups Reporting
Social .....	101	Welcoming .....	2
Calling and Visiting.....	33	Bazaar .....	1
Flower .....	23	Catering .....	1
Sick .....	14	Commissariat .....	1
Entertainment .....	11	Dinner .....	1
Decorating .....	9	Eats .....	1
Welfare .....	9	Good Cheer.....	1
Attendance .....	8	Helping Hand.....	1
Lookout .....	7	House .....	1
Courtesy .....	4	Needy Fund .....	1
Fellowship .....	4	Recreation .....	1
Hospitality .....	4	Room .....	1
Ladies' Affairs.....	3	Scout .....	1
Reception .....	3	Shut-in .....	1
Birthday .....	2	Sports .....	1
Glad Hand .....	2	Stag .....	1
Greeter .....	2	Supply .....	1
Men's Athletics.....	2	Transportation .....	1
Refreshments .....	2	Usher .....	1
38 different committees		TOTAL.....	263

(2) Committees concerned with the educational and spiritual aspects of the program:

Name of Committee	No. of Groups Reporting	Name of Committee	No. of Groups Reporting
Program .....	25	Church Attendance.....	1
Social Service .....	20	Dramatics .....	1
Devotional .....	15	Evangelistic .....	1
Missionary .....	12	Lesson .....	1
Music .....	11	Prayer Group .....	1
Church Relations .....	4	Spiritual Welfare.....	1
Benevolence .....	1	Stewardship .....	1
14 different committees		TOTAL.....	95

## (3) Committees assuming general responsibilities:

Name of Committee	No. of Groups Reporting	Name of Committee	No. of Groups Reporting
Membership .....	63	Editorial .....	1
Publicity .....	11	Historian .....	1
Ways and Means.....	7	Invitation .....	1
Class Paper.....	2	Kicker .....	1
Finance .....	2	Nominating .....	1
Telephone .....	2	Year Book.....	1
Collection .....	1		
13 different committees		TOTAL.....	94

Of the 452 committees reported, 263 are concerned with the social or fellowship aspects of the group work; 95 with the educational and spiritual; and 94 with general executive management. From the above it appears again, as in the study of motives for forming the groups (Chapter III), that the groups are neglecting the formal educational aspects and laying great stress upon friendship and social activities. Thus, both in what they say about their purposes (Chapter III), and in committee evidences of what they do, the desire for fellowship is clearly the strongest motive in planning the programs of the groups.

## 2. PROGRAM EMPHASIS RECORDED BY 105 GROUPS

Another significant insight into the emphasis on different group activities is found in Table 6. Each group was asked to check sixteen program items for great, moderate or slight emphasis. A score of three was given to the "great," two to the "moderate" and one to the "slight" checks. A zero score was given to the unchecked items. By adding the scores the following order of emphasis in the programs of reporting groups was obtained:



## Program Emphasis in 105 Groups

Table 6

Total Score	Order of Emphasis	Program Item
396	1	Social fellowship
394	2	Study of the Bible
357	3	Worship
260	4	Civic responsibilities
259	5	A philosophy of life
251	6	Problems of the economic and social order
240	7	Parent-child relations
239	8	Race and international relations
211	9	Problems of recreation
171	10	Problems of marriage adjustment
153	11	Health problems
135	12	Vocational problems
134	13	Financial aspects of home management
120	14	Home crafts
116	15	Aesthetic interests
112	16	Consumer education

Interpreting the table, it appears that in their programs the groups as a whole lay:

*Great Emphasis on:*

Social fellowship  
Bible study  
Worship

*Moderate Emphasis on:*

Problems of the social order, including civic affairs,  
economics, race and international relations.  
A philosophy of life  
Parent-child relationships  
Problems of recreation

*Slight Emphasis on:*

Marriage adjustments  
Health  
Vocation

Home finance  
Home crafts  
Aesthetic interests  
Consumer education

A study of the scores by the three age levels—Young, Second Older, and combined Third, Fourth and Fifth Older groups—presents a striking uniformity in the order of emphasis. Without exception, each of the three sections mentioned in the above paragraph includes exactly the same program items in the checking by all three of the age level groups. This table, therefore, reveals the items on which the groups as a whole, regardless of their age level, are laying great, moderate or slight emphasis.

As revealed in the study of motivation in the previous chapter and in the study of committee work, here again the satisfaction of the desire for social fellowship stands out as the primary purpose of the groups. The fact that in these three separate sets of data is found this same strong emphasis on fellowship has led to the conclusion that an absorbing interest of these young people centers around the "gregarious instinct" or the need for rewarding friendships.

This finding is confirmed by a recent study made at Cornell University of 347 young married persons living in rural communities near Ithaca, New York. These young married people, all under twenty-nine years of age, were asked for suggestions regarding assistance which the community might give them. In their replies thirty-three per cent of the men and forty-three per cent of the women asked for the provision of "more social and recreational facilities." No other one suggestion was made by more than four per cent of the men or women. But they were insistent that they wanted more organized groups for social recreation. The report adds: "Anyone who expects to work

with these married men and women would do well to assist them in this problem . . . Agencies interested in family life . . . could perform much service by preparing constructive suggestions as to enjoyable activities that families may participate in as a group."<sup>1</sup>

We may conclude, then, that a church which develops skills in meeting needs for constructive social fellowship is taking the first and probably the most important step in appealing to the young married constituency.

Finding Bible study and worship second and third in the program emphasis also has great significance. Here again, as in the study of motives, a distinct evidence of desire to satisfy spiritual needs has been evidenced. The fifteen churches which have formed social clubs, without a specific "religious" program, seem, therefore, in danger of neglecting a major interest of their members.

This high place given to the Bible and worship may, as in the study of motives, be partly due to a sense of propriety. These are church groups, their chief concern ought to be religion, the program committees may have thought.

Added to Bible study and worship, a philosophy of life is put comparatively high on the list. It seems evident, therefore, that these young men and women have a desire for that stability and confidence which come from a sense of harmony with the more than human order in the universe.<sup>2</sup> They are seeking for something that interprets the meaning of individual experience, that unifies life and that sends them out with a clear sense of direction.

The placing of civic responsibilities, problems of the

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1. *Rural Youth: Activities, Interests and Problems. 1. Married Young Men and Women, 15 to 29 Years of Age.* Published by the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, Ithaca, New York, Bulletin 649, May, 1936, pp. 40-43.
  2. Hough, Horace T., *What Religion Is and Does.* New York, Harper and Brothers, 1935, p. 7.

economic and social order, and race and international relations in the "moderate" emphasis section, suggests an interest in the social implications of religion. These topics have a slightly higher rating here than in the study of motivation in Chapter III. This moderate emphasis on socialized religion seems to reflect the struggle taking place in the Christian church between the "pure gospel" of individualism and the application of Christianity to the guidance of social change. In this conflict it is hoped that young adults will increasingly insist that their group discussions shall squarely face religion's implications for life's practical affairs.

The items at the bottom of the list in the table—"vocation," "home finance," "home crafts," "aesthetic interests," and "consumer education"—indicate undeveloped programs in areas in which leadership in the church has been distinctly lacking. But it is surprising that here, as well as in the report on motives (Chapter III), problems of marriage adjustments and parent-child relationships are found low in the order of emphasis. While notable exceptions are seen in the case studies on the following pages, it is probably true that in the study periods of a majority of these groups these topics which would seem to be the most vital daily needs of the members are being neglected. This neglect may be a result of past church emphasis on other-worldliness, and of the assumption that life is divided into compartments of which the church deals only with the religious. If, however, these groups accept a philosophy of education which aims to meet the fundamental wants and needs of people in all the areas of living, an adjustment in program emphasis must be made. This question of the basic human needs which a group should aim to satisfy will be discussed further in Chapter VII.

### 3. CASE STUDIES IN PROGRAM EMPHASIS

A few groups have conducted an outstanding program dealing with some of the less emphasized vital areas of interest mentioned above. Case studies of curriculum emphasis on Marriage and the Home, Parent Education, Socio-physical Recreation, and Economics and Social Change are presented on the following pages.

#### (1) *Emphasis on Marriage and the Home*

##### a. The Home Builders Class

Eighty-one men and women, ranging in age from twenty-five to forty, form the active membership of the Home Builders Class of the Hollywood-Beverly Christian Church, Los Angeles. Dr. Kleihauer, the pastor of the church, teaches the group. He has specialized in literature on the Home. In his library he has accumulated more than seventy-five volumes relating to Marriage and the Family. Because of his appreciation of their personal problems and of their potentialities for church and community leadership, this busy preacher-teacher is gladly giving himself to the members of this group. He has presented courses on "The Home," "The Meaning and the Making of the New Testament," and on "Family Relations."

In a printed folder the "Purpose of the Class" is described as follows:

Believing that the home is one of the most vital and fundamental institutions in the social structure of life, we have organized the Home Builders Class for younger married couples:

1. To provide an educational opportunity in the art and work of home building.
2. To provide an opportunity for discussing the problems of life.
3. To provide an opportunity for wholesome social and recreational life that is consonant with the spirit and purpose of the home.
4. To provide an opportunity for spiritual training and expression in the program of home building.
5. To provide an opportunity for mutual helpfulness and for social service through the cooperative strength of the class.

This is one of the few groups observed which is giving major emphasis to marriage and home problems.

b. A Bride and Groom Night

Another pastor-teacher of a group conducts an annual married couples' homecoming which is an effective educational project in marriage relations. This was attended by the writer on the second Sunday evening in September, 1935, when the Pico Heights Christian Church of Los Angeles held the "eighth anniversary of our 'Bride and Groom' night." Into this church of two hundred members, seating normally 226, there crowded 337 people. They were eager to share in a program which attracted back to the church sixty-one of the 265 couples whom the pastor had married during the eight years of his ministry.

By request the visitor was seated among the brides and grooms. On the left was an attractive couple brought up in the church, married a year before. To the right sat a girl nineteen years of age, a bride of six weeks, who had driven in with her boyish-looking husband from a city twenty miles away. Others had come from San Diego, one hundred and thirty miles to the south, and from many surrounding communities of lesser distance. The first couple, married eight years ago, came back to the reunion with their youngest child. A few other small children were also present.

The program opened with a "Happy Song Service" led by an experienced song leader from a service club to which the minister belongs. The following hymns were vigorously sung:

"Since Jesus Came Into My Heart"

"The Old Rugged Cross"

"Stand Up For Jesus"

"Just As I Am"

"He Careth For You"

"When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder"

An Irish tenor sang with exquisite gentleness:

"I Love You Truly"

"I Love Life"

"Sylvia"

The Scripture, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" was read by the pastor, followed by prayer. Then came a brief, pastoral talk on "Does Marriage Pay?" In this program an honest, wise, married man shared experiences with his children of the wedding ceremonies. The reunion ended with the wedding of John William Gray and Marie Constantino. Through this ceremony Reverend Mr. Fish was remarrying every one of the married persons present. One could not help resolving to be a better mate than in the past. After the bridal party had walked down the aisle and the service had ended, the newly-married couple stood in the church entrance to be congratulated. Twenty minutes later without any throwing of rice or old shoes, they left in an automobile driven by a friend. This joyous reunion and wedding impressed the visitor as a powerfully effective project method of religious education in wholesome family life.

In the Central Christian Church in Glendale a similar program once a year in June is arranged by the young married people's class. One feature is the appearance of several of the former brides in their wedding dresses. If to such reunions after the wedding there were added adequate techniques of educating young people before the wedding, as is suggested in Chapter VIII, marriage would more nearly become a "joining in the holy bonds of matrimony."

## (2) *Emphasis on Parent Education*

The Parents' Class of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church is one of the three examples<sup>1</sup> discovered in Southern Cali-

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1. The other two are in the Pasadena First Methodist Church.

fornia of a married people's group built on the emphasis of parent-child relationship.

Three unusual individuals have given themselves to this group: Miss Blanche E. Wachob, Mrs. Robert Freeman and Mrs. R. S. McClelland. Miss Wachob for eighteen years has been the efficient director of religious education. Mrs. Freeman, wife of the pastor, is the mother of five children, and a woman of rare personality. Mrs. McClelland, the class leader, a graduate of Smith College, is a born teacher with a genius for friendship, for organization and for setting others to work. Her husband, an earnest Christian business man, has given her full cooperation. Of Mrs. McClelland, Mrs. Freeman says: "Since this parents' class was organized Mrs. McClelland has devoted as much time and energy to the group as the average minister gives to his whole church and parish work."

The class keeps a Log Book. It is loose-leafed, already two inches thick, filled with photographs, typed annual reports, newspaper clippings, records of class events, songs, book lists, mimeographed announcements, church bulletins and other records of the class. From this record one learns that "the class was organized April 22, 1923, by calling together a group of five mothers who had been watching their children in the beginners' department." They were members of a Mother's Club, organized the previous fall.

In an early announcement appears the following:

All mothers interested (fathers also) are especially invited to visit the class for a Sunday or two, if they wish, before becoming members. There is a good library in circulation. The class meets at 9:30 Sunday mornings.

As indicated above, this group gradually changed from a class of mothers to a mixed class of parents. The change began with the attendance of fathers at the social gatherings. Then one by one they came to the Sunday morning group. In the second year, men were elected vice-president



and treasurer, but in the third, fourth and fifth years all officers were women. In the fourth year, the Sunday class was for the first time led by a man. *A Father's Ten Commandments*, by Roy E. Dickerson, was distributed. A rapid growth in fathers' attendance began in 1931 when the "Singing Dads," a male chorus from this class, began to appear at church socials, hospitals and other community gatherings. Since that time the men have been meeting weekly during the winter for singing and volley ball. In the ninth year for the first time a man was elected president.

In the early months, sometimes with the aid of special speakers, some topics discussed were:

"The Atmosphere of the Home"

"Making God Real to the Children"

"Teaching the Children to Pray"

"Family Worship"

"Children's Questions about the Bible"

"Sunday in the Home"

One of the striking features of the work of this class has been the circulation of books and magazines among its members. On the Sunday when the class was visited the book table in the corner was covered with magazines such as *Character* and *Parent Education*, and with many books brought by the librarian from the public library. About half of these books were for children, and the others were for parents. In 1930-31, 564 books were circulated among sixty-six families—an average circulation of nineteen per Sunday. In 1932-33, 1,072 books were given out on thirty-two Sundays. In 1933-34 the number reached 1,482 in seventy-six different families. Promoting the reading of books, magazines and pamphlets on such a scale is in itself a large educational activity.

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tained eight books of "Bible Stories for Children," eight "Missionary Stories," eight "Books Helpful to Mothers," and five "Sermonettes." "Children's Songs" were mimeographed and given out to class members during the first year. "Prayers for Little Children," printed by the church Mothers' Council, were distributed at the Parents' Class. A recent bibliography, entitled "Interpreting the Bible to Our Children," gave "Books on the Modern Interpretation of the Bible," headed by Fosdick's *The Modern Use of the Bible*; and five "Modern Translations of the Bible," including Kent's, Moffatt's and Goodspeed's.

In 1934 one of the members prepared in three mimeographed pages a list of possible things to do and places to visit. On the front was a cut of two parents with their two children standing before a door labeled "Adventure." Fifty-three possible experiences were listed under the nine headings of:

Home Adventures, such as gardening and keeping bees and pets.

School Adventures, like visiting the children's school, and children going to scientific laboratories and the State University.

Church Adventures, especially visits to Catholic, Jewish and Christian Science churches, and to a beautiful mausoleum.

In a similar vein, suggestions were made for Civic, Park, Camp, Historical and Industrial Adventures, such as trips to a dairy, a newspaper, a municipal light plant, a laundry and a tire company. As a ninth adventure, various trips were suggested to mountains, a horse ranch and an airport.

In 1930, as an extension of the work of this class, the church formed a Mothers' Council which meets six times a year on the fourth Monday of the month from 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The attendance is frequently more than two

hundred. This has become an influential educational activity in the church community.

A class song written by Mrs. Freeman was printed and used by the class. This original bit of suggestive poetry is quoted in full:

"Playing with our children  
Quickens all our joys,  
Makes us truly comrades  
Of our girls and boys.  
Knotted nerves untangle,  
Tempers smooth away,  
Homes o'erflow with gladness  
As we learn to play.

"Growing with our children,  
Lest we fall behind,  
Keep we ever open  
Heart and soul and mind.  
Changing old ideas  
As new truth appears,  
Thinking with our children,  
We may laugh at years.

"Praying with our children,  
Teach us, Lord, to pray,  
Lest we prove a hindrance  
On their Godward way.  
Lord, help us to know Thee,  
Live so close to Thee,  
That in us our children  
May thine image see."

A grace for meals with its melody was written by Doctor Freeman, the pastor, and a harmony completed by the church organist. This is frequently sung at the Parents' Class and always at the class council dinners:

"O Thou, from whom unfailing come  
Rich bounties each new day,—  
An eager heart, a happy home;  
Health to pursue our way;

Whose providences still afford  
Our bed, our work, our food;  
For these, and all Thy mercies, Lord  
Accept our gratitude."

This class has been a Southern California pioneer in building a program of parent education for a church group of mothers and fathers.

### (3) *Emphasis on Socio-physical Recreation*

A monthly social, dinner, picnic, or other outing appears to be in the program of nearly every group. The significance of the social fellowship in the groups, as repeatedly mentioned, cannot be too greatly stressed. An adequate opportunity, however, for physical recreation has been provided by but few groups. But in one Los Angeles church striking provision for this need of young couples was observed.

On an unusually hot summer evening (August 26, 1935) a visit was made to the Monday gymnasium night of the ARTHO (Always Ready To Help Others) Society of the Roger Williams Baptist Church. Soon after the completion of the church gymnasium in 1933 this married people's group, then three years old, conceived the idea of a weekly game night for members and friends. In the gymnasium at eight o'clock a volley ball game was in progress. On one side of the net were ten men and three women, and on the other side seven men and five women. Six women and two men were looking on. After two games a men's game was organized with ten on each side, and three men looking on. After this the women alone lined up for their game. At 9:50 another mixed game was interrupted and all gathered near the kitchen to eat a "milk nickel"—a chocolate-coated ice cream stick.

The president and membership secretary of the group said that this Monday night mixer was one of the most profitable activities of their class. Nearly every week, they reported, guests or strangers stray into the gymnasium,

some of whom later join the group. The class is the only young adult class in the church so that a few of the members are unmarried, but of these some have already become engaged. Three-fourths of the forty or more people present on the night visited were about thirty-two years old or under. A few children were present, including one small baby about six months old, whose mother seemed to be thoroughly enjoying the volley ball game. The satisfaction these young people were obviously deriving from their games suggested that both this and the Sunday afternoon tennis tournament another city church group was enjoying were real projects in religious education.

As Doctor Paul Popenoe, head of the Los Angeles Institute of Family Relations, has found that the lack of recreational games in which husband and wife may take part together seems to be one of the large causes of marital discord,<sup>1</sup> this gym night of the Roger Williams Baptist Church group may be prophetic of a type of work which should be greatly extended. Some churches have built gymnasiums and now wonder what to do with them. With a very little supervision a group of young adults like this could answer this church question for at least one night a week. Why should the church lag behind commercial recreation which is already making experiments in providing opportunities for men and women to engage in physical recreation together?<sup>2</sup>

#### (4) *Emphasis on Economics and Social Change*

An unusual round table or seminar, majoring in problems of the social order, was found in the Los Angeles First Congregational Church. In the fall of 1933, the Junior Guild, composed of young married women, was

- 
1. Popenoe, Paul, "A Family Consultation Service," *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Vol. 17, No. 6, June, 1931, p. 315.
  2. Busch, Henry M., *Leadership in Group Work*. New York, Association Press, 1934, p. 14.

meeting in the church, partly for social fellowship and partly for an educational program. Some of these wives proposed that they should have a meeting of husbands and wives together and secure a leader for the group. With the help of the church director of religious education, Doctor Briggs was secured. At first they met late on Sunday afternoon. The group is made up entirely of college graduates, or those with an equivalent education, who have no desire to join a typical Bible study class.

At the first meeting of the group they considered subjects for their study. Doctor Briggs suggested topics on which he felt he could give the best guidance. They made their selection and since then have followed his leadership over a rather wide range of book reviews and discussions of topics such as "Seven different methods of wealth distribution," "Present economic revolution in America," "Pioneers of science," "A social theory of religious education," "How can we motivate people to better lives?" "What kind of church will meet the needs of our day?" "The pro and con of birth control," "Practical steps to make the Christian religion vital," "Paths to the presence of God," and, before the election in the fall of 1934, "A presentation of the platforms of modern political parties—Republican, Democrat, Communist, Socialist." At the closing Sunday of the second year, one of the members, a business man of considerable experience, gave a presentation of the Douglas Plan for Social Credit. It was an excellent paper followed by discussion in which most of those present participated.

During an evening's conference with seven members of this group no interest was expressed at that time in a study of marriage or parent-child relations. On the contrary they indicated in no uncertain terms that they had already met these problems and had no desire to have them presented in this class. They seemed, however, to be eager in their



search for a Christian philosophy of life by which they could find an interpretation and solution of economic and social problems.

A few of the books used by Doctor Briggs are:

*The Epic of America*, by James Truslow Adams

*Contemporary Social Problems*, by Jerome Davis

*The New Deal*, by Stuart Chase

*We Move in New Directions*, by H. A. Overstreet

*The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism*, by Bernard Shaw

*America Comes of Age*, by Andre Siegfried

*The Meaning of Adult Education*, by Eduard C. Lindeman

During the summer of 1935 the group had no regular meetings at the church. But a committee, at the request of their leader, prepared a program outline for the coming year. This was in five sections, as follows:

a. Four special programs to be prepared by the church pastor for Thanksgiving, Christmas, a Lenten Sunday and Easter.

b. Modern Religions, including Taoism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Mohammedanism and Modern Judaism.

c. Christianity: The History of the Roman and Greek Churches and the Protestant Sects. In what way have these Christian groups affected the economic and social structure of modern society?

d. Transition Periods in History: From early social history, through Feudalism and the Industrial Revolution, to Capitalism.

e. Present day Social, Economic and Political Problems. (To take the whole of the last half year.)

During the fall twelve papers on the above subjects were presented by members of the class, followed by discussions

led by Doctor Briggs. This group illustrates how a program adapted to their interests, and keen, sympathetic leadership, will attract college graduates and live business and professional young people who, critical of the church, are avoiding ordinary church activities and appeals. The significance of this for the future of the church is discussed in Chapter VIII.

#### 4. SUMMARY

What can be learned of group programs from the sixty-five committees, the order of emphasis in the sixteen program items, and from the four types of case studies?

Six points have emerged:

(1) The groups place first emphasis upon the fellowship or social aspects of their activities. By so doing, one of the deepest wants of young married people is being met.

(2) In the strong emphasis upon Bible study, worship and a philosophy of life, the programs recognize the universal yearning for the unification of life by integration with the wholeness of the universe, which in the Christian conception is oneness with God as revealed in Christ.

(3) A moderate emphasis upon the problems of the economic and social order and of race and international relations seems to indicate that these items are demanding some attention in the religious education programs of churches.

(4) The reports of pioneering journeys by individual groups into the fields of marriage and the home, parent education, family recreation, and problems of social change suggest the possibility of broadening the program of each group so as to meet a wider range of interests and needs.

(5) In the table of program emphasis, the low place given to problems of marriage and the family indicates a general neglect of what must be the most vital interests of young married people.

(6) When the teaching programs seem so generally unrelated to their deepest concerns, why do the members cling so tenaciously to the classes? It is probable that in informal fellowship relations some of the most significant educational experiences take place. As one listens to the hum of conversation before meetings begin, during the monthly socials, or in the church lobby after the Sunday class, one hears discussed the vital concerns of home, children, business and recreation. At their occasional teas women share experiences with expectant mothers. During informal calls questions of home finance, house plans and vocational change are freely talked about. Through the doors of friendship opened by membership in the groups may go more vital education than takes place during many of the formal teaching hours.

In public school education the importance of out-of-school learning is recognized. The president of Columbia University has said: "The school is the center of organized instruction, but the home and the environment are the outstanding contributing influences in the educational process."<sup>1</sup> Many of these groups, with their emphasis on Bible study unrelated to life, remind one of Bode's description of the rural schools of his boyhood. The pupils learned about vocations, economics, religion and manners in the home, the church and the community, not in the school. "All the heavy work," he says, "was done outside the school . . . A person could teach then without feeling that the burden of the universe was resting on his shoulders."<sup>2</sup> But progressive education is now insisting that formal teaching should be related to the practical experiences of living. If, therefore, to the informal exchanges of experience in

- 
1. Butler, Nicholas Murray, "The Schools and the Community," *Teachers College Record*, Vol. 37, No. 7, April, 1926, p. 578.
  2. Bode, Boyd H., "Education and Social Change," *Progressive Education*, January-February, 1934, p. 45.

the fellowship aspects of the groups could be added a high type of formal teaching, planned to meet known interests and needs, as is found in a few instances, these groups might take an important place in the American educational scene. They would then be based on both a sound psychology of fellowship and modern educational technique.

## Chapter V

### EDUCATIONAL PROCEDURE IN THE GROUPS

Having examined in Chapter IV the program emphasis in the groups as evidenced in their form of organization and committees, in case studies, and in order of emphasis on sixteen program items, we now turn to the questions:

Who are the teachers?

How and what do they teach?

What informal educational experiences do the groups have?

#### 1. WHO ARE THE TEACHERS?

##### (1) *Occupations of the Teachers*

Teachers have been drawn from eighty different occupations. While no test of teaching efficiency has been applied, it may at least be said that no teacher has wrecked his group. The reports were all from existing classes. With six exceptions each group reported the name and occupation of one or more of the present and past teachers or leaders. Of the 389 thus reported 102 are women and 287 are men.

#### Occupations of 389 Past and Present Teachers

Table 7

68 Church Pastors	6 Directors of Religious Education
56 Housewives	6 Insurance Salesmen
33 Elementary School Teachers (12 Women)	6 Real Estate Dealers (1 Woman)
20 College Professors	5 Business Men
18 High School Teachers	4 High School Principals
18 Pastors' Wives	3 Bankers
15 Retired Ministers	3 College Presidents
11 Lawyers	3 Contractors
9 Ranchers	3 Carpenters
8 Physicians	3 Grocers
8 Salesmen	3 School Principals
7 YMCA Secretaries	

3 Store Clerks (1 Woman)	2 High School Vice-Principals
3 Wood Workers	2 Judges
2 Adult Education Teachers (1 Woman)	2 Mayors of Cities
2 Assistant Pastors	2 Printers
2 Business Executives	2 Retired Missionaries
2 Chemists	2 Retired Teachers
2 Carpenters and Preachers	2 Social Workers (1 Woman)

One representative each of forty-three occupations as follows:

Auctioneer	Painter
Bible Lecturer	Pastor's Mother
Chiropractor	Photographer
City Clerk	Playground Superintendent
City Attorney	Postmaster
Civil Engineer	Post Office Employee
Deputy Superintendent of Schools	P.T.A. President—Woman
Druggist	Retired Minister's Wife
Editor of Paper	Retired Deaconess
Gardener	Saleswoman
Interior Decorator	School Board Member
Investment Broker	Scientist
Jeweler	Secretary of Building and Loan Association
Lecturer—Woman	Soldier
Librarian—Woman	Student in Bible School
Manager of Insurance Agency	Tile Setter
Manufacturer	Truck Driver
Mason	Unmarried Lady
Masseuse	Warehouse Man
Meat Dealer	Woman's Club Officer
Newspaper Agent	Writer—Woman
Nurse—Woman	

Of the 389 teachers, 220 are pastors, pastors' wives, school or college teachers, religious educators, social workers, missionaries, lecturers, or are engaged in one of twenty-nine occupations which would indicate some teaching preparation. The other 169 represent fifty-one trades, professions and other forms of business, such as housewives,

lawyers, ranchers, physicians, salesmen and mechanics. Even among these there may be many with teacher-training experience. Most of the teachers, therefore, are drawn from an occupation in which they may have had some teaching preparation.

"How can we find a teacher?" has been frequently asked by church leaders. The variety of teacher sources found in Table 7 may hearten any church worker who is looking over his clientele for leadership possibilities. If adequate guidance material for teachers and life-touching courses of study for the members were available, securing teachers for the oncoming groups should not be an impossible task.

## (2) *Effective Teachers Found in Three Case Studies*

### a. Friendly Teachers

The JU (Join Us) class became a vital part of the Whittier Methodist Church when, in January, 1926, Mr. and Mrs. Glenn O. Fogleman became the leaders. Through their leadership, together with a stable nucleus of young couples who had married as a result of their social relations in high school and college days, the class entered upon a period of steady growth. The class now enrolls 108 couples. Besides the Sunday morning program, it conducts a monthly social, a monthly ladies' meeting and, three or four times a year, stag parties or picnics for the men.

In a real sense the J U Class is Mr. and Mrs. Fogleman. When they took the leadership, Mr. Fogleman was the teacher. He was at that time an outside salesman. He said to the writer:

On Saturday afternoon I would go home and lock the door on myself for five or six hours. I would stay with it sometimes until the wee small hours so that I could give it to them hot off the griddle. Ten hours a week—never less than that—was the time put into preparation for this class. Mrs. Fogleman and I called together in the homes so as to interest the men. A man could not call alone, and a woman

would not interest the husbands. We still try to call on every member at least once a year. Wife and I have sensed domestic troubles and quietly and almost without their knowing it, we have straightened out many difficulties. In one case only was there a divorce.

After about two years Mr. Fogleman became manager of his firm. His duties suddenly changed from outside travel to office work. This necessitated outdoor recreation which he had to take on Saturdays. He was about to give up the class when some members asked Mrs. Fogleman to become the leader. For the last seven years, therefore, Mrs. Fogleman, a college graduate and for many years an active leader in women's club work, and now a grandmother, with no children of her own at home, has been the teacher. Under her leadership the class has studied "The Christian Home," "Conception of God," "How We got our Bible," "The Sermon on the Mount," and "Christian Citizenship."

Mr. and Mrs. Fogleman, with a secret committee cooperating, administer a "helping hand fund" which is always available for needy members. No public mention is made of the individuals to whom the loans are made. For the fund seventy-five dollars was once raised by an "old-time concert." At another time one hundred dollars was raised by a special movie, and seventy-five dollars by another entertainment. Contributions have also been made through the class collections. This fund and the counsel of Mr. and Mrs. Fogleman have created a confidence that members' needs will be met by the class and the teachers. "This feeling of security by the members has combined (with the other activities) to make a success of the class," said Mr. Fogleman. As a typical illustration of such friendly service, a young man and his wife, recently in financial difficulties because of the depression, were about to lose their accumulations. By helping the man to secure a temporary job,



and later a permanent one, their family status has been fully restored.

Mr. and Mrs. Fogleman were attendants at the first round table on young married people's group work called in the spring of 1930 by the Southern California Council of Religious Education.

**b. Husband and Wife Sharing Equally in Leadership**

Although in six cases, as in the above mentioned group, leadership has been found to be divided between a teacher couple, the following is one of the outstanding instances of such sharing.

In January, 1932, Mr. and Mrs. George H. Gamble, weary of the intellectual restraint of some other churches, joined the Mount Hollywood Community Congregational Church. This church has attracted an unusually liberal and independent type of people. Mr. and Mrs. Gamble were asked to lead a proposed class of married couples. Mr. Gamble, a junior high school teacher with a theological school training, took the leadership of the Sunday Bible study, and Mrs. Gamble headed up parent training and the social life of the group.

Under Mr. Gamble this young married people's class studied:

"Modern Interpretation of Christian Beliefs"

"Modern Interpretation of Books of the Old Testament"

"The Life of Paul"

"The Sermon on the Mount"

"The Time and Influence under which the New Testament was written"

"Heroes of the Bible"

Once a month Mrs. Gamble leads a course in personal counseling for marriage and the home, prepared by Doctor Paul Popenoe of the Institute of Family Relations. At the

monthly dinners members of the class have read papers on:

“Family Budgeting”

“Religion in the Home”

“Leisure Time in the Home”

“Nutrition”

Mrs. Gamble led three monthly meetings on the subject of “Discipline.”<sup>1</sup> For a year outside speakers at the monthly dinner meetings have lectured on “The Seven Cardinal Principles of Education.”

In an evening interview with five members of this class, the following remarks were made:

Mr. Gamble's teaching is what draws everyone to the class. He helps clear up all Bible inconsistencies.

He does not use the old catch phrases of religion.

George (Mr. Gamble) seeks to find a middle way between fundamentalists and liberals. This is what the group requested in regard to the historical background of the Bible. George knows all sides. He is a religious teacher.

We are not taking solutions to our problems which were prevalent ten or fifteen years ago; we are seeking solutions which are adaptable now.

We are never rushed. Nobody feels self-conscious. We are free to ask questions.

Although controversy is always welcome, when he finishes the discussion we feel that the question is closed. We take George Gamble's word for it.

If people were not intelligent they would not come to this class.

George has an urge to express himself. It is part of him. He loves this work in the class.

In discussing the purpose of the class, one member defined it: “To take up the best in religion in order to hand it on to the kids.” “All of our best speakers,” said another, “have been on child care. The thought of the special speakers centers around children.”

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1. This has been published under the title, *A Present Day Attitude Toward Discipline*, Los Angeles, YMCA, 1934.

"At every social meeting I have been to," said a man who seldom attends Sundays, "Dorothy (Mrs. Gamble) is asking for funds to subscribe to another magazine on children."

A partial list of the books and pamphlets accumulated in the class library, largely by Mrs. Gamble's effort, is as follows:

Pierce, Frederick, *Understanding Our Children*. New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, 1926.

Dahlberg, Edwin T., *Youth and the Homes of Tomorrow*. Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1934.

*The Mother's Encyclopedia*. New York, The Parent Publishing Association, Inc., 1933.

Pamphlets from the Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.:

*Prenatal Care*

*Infant Care*

*The Child from One to Six*

*Child Management*

*Are you training Your Child to be Happy?*

Other pamphlets from the Women's Cooperative Alliance, Inc., Minneapolis; Department of Public Health, Sacramento, California; Wisconsin State Board of Health; U. S. Public Health Service; Bureau of Education of the Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.; and Child Study Association of America.

*The Parents' Magazine*

Pamphlets on Sex and Marriage:

Butterfield, Oliver M., *Marriage*. New York, Emerson Books, Inc., 1934.

Eddy, Sherwood, *Sex and Youth*. New York, Doubleday, Doran and Company.

Wright, Helena, *The Sex Factor in Marriage*.

This library exemplifies how, by using inexpensive publications, a valuable collection of resource materials for mar-

ried couples and parents may be assembled at a trifling cost.

The class sponsors the nursery and the cradle roll departments of the Sunday School. Six members are teaching classes. A supervisor for little children is employed during the church period. During one year sixteen from the class joined the church.

This group illustrates what has been found in only five other groups, that a man and his wife working together as leaders probably more than double the efficiency of one working alone. In one of the Long Beach churches, a real estate dealer and his wife alternate in teaching the Sunday lesson. This gives each two weeks instead of one for preparation. In many other instances there is informal cooperation by husbands and wives.

Of Mr. and Mrs. Gamble their pastor wrote:<sup>1</sup>

In their class of young married people they are demonstrating that a new trail can be blazed in our churches. They are leading home-makers to understand marriage and parenthood in the light of the most scientific findings as well as the mind of Jesus. Their work is so important because it is aimed at *preventing* the wreckage of marriage and not just gathering up the broken pieces.

### c. A College Professor as Teacher

In 1933, Professor W. W. Mather of the nearby Chaffey Junior College became the teacher of the Junior Adult Class of the First M.E. Church of Upland. Under his leadership this group has grown to a membership of seventy-one, forty-five of whom are married. Thirty-five attend the Sunday class and forty-five, the monthly socials. Into this group Professor Mather is trying to bring his experience as an educator. "I will not teach from the hodge podge called 'Uniform Lessons.' I make my own syllabus for the year," he said.

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1. In a personal letter to the writer.

He has given courses in:

"The Nature and Concepts of God"

"Organization and Doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church"

"The Book of Romans"

"The Social Teachings of Jesus"

On the day when the class was visited by the writer, nine took part in discussion, both answering and asking questions on the topic: "What ought to be Done to Make Our Christianity Attractive?"

In December, 1935, the pastor of the church wrote:<sup>1</sup>

Within two weeks seven of this group have joined the church. Its success lies in its teacher, Professor W. W. Mather, head of the Social Science Department of the Junior College. Few of our classes are doing better work. This Junior Adult department meets by itself, directs itself, yet contributes to the life of the church. Such a unit is often a neglected part of our church life.

To relate to the realities of life both science and religion as an integrated whole is Professor Mather's conception of the educational task of the teacher.

## 2. CONDITIONS WHICH EFFECTIVE TEACHERS FULFILL

In watching their leadership there seem to be rather definite conditions met by the outstanding teachers observed in this study. Some of these conditions are:

(1) They are students of available resource materials.

(2) They give time to the class—one teacher as much as ten hours a week to lesson preparation. Spending time in becoming acquainted with the members may also be as important as preparing the Sunday lessons. "Only as he (the leader) comes to know something of their daily lives . . . can he discover issues of real concern," says a student of such leaders.<sup>2</sup>

1. In a personal letter to the writer.

2. Busch, Henry M., *Leadership in Group Work*. New York, Association Press, 1934, p. 183.

(3) They love and win the love of their young people. One man who had founded and taught a group for twenty-one years was overheard by the writer calling the class president on the phone. "This is Dad speaking," was the opening remark. At Christmas, as an evidence of appreciation, a class presented to their teacher and his wife a beautiful silk quilt made by the "girls" of the group. Such instances corroborate the observation of Professor Busch: "There is little likelihood of continuous, successful group leadership when the members do not possess feelings of admiration and affection for the leader."<sup>1</sup>

(4) They attend conferences and training schools and seek to grow in leadership skills.

(5) Husbands and wives frequently cooperate, especially in calling in homes. Their different qualities of personality are thus made available in the class leadership.

(6) They seek to grow in their worshipful experience. One teacher-couple found their opportunity in an Oxford Group.

### 3. HOW AND WHAT DO THE TEACHERS TEACH?

Reports were gathered on teaching techniques and courses of study used. Five teaching methods were checked as having "great," "moderate" or "slight" use. A weight of three was given to "great," of two to "moderate," and one to "slight." The following scores resulted:

#### (1) *Educational Methods Used*

Table 8

Total Score	Order of Emphasis	Educational Method Used
383	1	Discussion led by the regular leader
310	2	Address by the regular leader
191	3	Address by a special speaker
158	4	Reports on reading
150	5	Forum led by a special speaker

1. *Ibid*, p. 140.

Of the 164 groups reporting, only nineteen made "great" use of special speakers, only eleven made "great" use of the forum with a special speaker, and only nine laid "great" emphasis on the reports on reading. The chief responsibility for the class teaching obviously rests upon the regular leader. From the table it appears that leading discussions is more common than making addresses. From observation, however, discussion seems to be confined, as a rule, to a few minutes following the lecture or sermonette by the teacher. The technique of member participation in the formal study period is not generally understood. This problem of teaching skills is further discussed in Chapter VII.

### *(2) Courses of Study Used*

To ascertain what is taught in the groups, the question was asked: "What courses of study or teaching guides have been used?" The following table resulted:

# Comparative Use of International Uniform Lessons and Other Courses

Table 9

Denomination	No. Groups Reporting	Using Internat'l Uniform Lessons Only	Using Other Courses Only	Using Both
<b>Young Married People's Groups</b>				
Baptists .....	21	11	5	5
Christians .....	18	11	3	4
Congregationalists ..	3	0	3	0
Methodists .....	32	15	12	5
Presbyterians .....	15	7	7	1
Others .....	15	9	4	2
Totals .....	104	53	34	17
<b>Second Older Married People's Groups</b>				
Baptists .....	11	6	4	1
Christians .....	19	10	3	6
Congregationalists ..	5	3	2	0
Methodists .....	25	17	6	2
Presbyterians .....	10	4	3	3
Others .....	12	9	2	1
Totals .....	82	49	20	13
<b>Third, Fourth and Fifth Older Groups</b>				
All Denominations	9	5	2	2
Totals for All	195	107	56	32

The use of the International Uniform Lessons is more common among the Christian denomination and the denominations with few groups. The young groups use other courses more than the older groups.



# List of 153 Reports of Courses of Study Other Than the International Uniform Lessons

Table 10

In 153 reports of courses other than the International Uniform Lessons, only two resource books were mentioned more than once: *Parents' Own Problems*, a mimeographed course published by the Methodist Episcopal Board, and H. S. Elliott's *How Jesus Met Life Questions*, each mentioned twice.

The following are the other courses with the number of times each was mentioned:

(1) The Bible and the Old Testament .....	42
a. Bible or "Bible Only" .....	19
b. Bible History .....	4
c. Old Testament Books .....	4
d. Bible Characters .....	6
e. How We Got Our Bible .....	4
f. Modern Interpretation of the Bible .....	3
g. Miscellaneous .....	2
(2) The New Testament .....	37
a. Life of Christ .....	6
b. Sermon on the Mount .....	7
c. Book Studies .....	12
d. Teachings of Jesus .....	4
e. Life of Paul .....	3
f. Miscellaneous .....	5
(3) Marriage, Home and Parenthood .....	19
a. Parents' Own Problems .....	2
b. Charles Darsie, <i>The Christian Family</i> .....	1
c. Cope, <i>Religious Education in the Family</i> .....	1
d. Practical Psychology for Married People .....	1
e. Psychology of the Child .....	1
f. Miscellaneous Courses on the Home .....	6
g. Miscellaneous Courses on the Family .....	3
h. Miscellaneous Courses on Parent Education .....	4

(4) Problems of the Social Order .....	11
a. Christian Interpretation of Current Events.....	3
b. Social and Economic Questions.....	3
c. Christian Citizenship .....	2
d. Christian Action Bible Lesson .....	1
e. Jesus and Present Day Problems .....	1
f. Rauschenbush, <i>Social Principles of Jesus</i> .....	1
(5) Miscellaneous .....	44
a. Church History .....	4
b. University of Chicago Extension Courses.....	3
c. Comparative Religions .....	2
d. Conception of God .....	2
e. Book Reviews .....	2
f. Elliott, <i>How Jesus Met Life Questions</i> .....	2
g. Courses by H. E. Fosdick.....	1
h. Bruce Barton, <i>The Man Nobody Knows</i> .....	1
i. McRae, <i>Message and Program of the Christian Religion</i> .....	1
j. Brown, <i>This Believing World</i> .....	1
k. Lippmann, <i>Preface to Morals</i> .....	1
l. Goodspeed, <i>The Short Bible</i> .....	1
m. Bruce Curry, <i>The Bible and the Quest of Life</i> .....	1
n. Other Courses .....	22

Meaning of Tables 9 and 10:

More than half the groups use the International Uniform Lessons only.

Less than a third use other courses only.

About one sixth use both types of courses.

Of the courses other than the International Uniform Lessons, one half deal with the whole or parts of the Old and New Testaments; one eighth with Marriage, Home and Parenthood; one fourteenth with Problems of the Social Order; and a little less than one third are general.

From the above it is plain that little attention has been given to preparing courses of study for these groups, and that in hunting for suitable courses the leaders have not hit upon any that give general satisfaction. While most of the

groups still follow the International Uniform Lessons many are using a wide variety of more practical materials. Among the 153 other offerings are a few dealing with the issues of marriage, home, children, Christian citizenship, economic problems and other practical questions. This suggests that with guidance and the provision of suitable resource materials many groups would welcome a greatly enriched program.

This review of the courses of study confirms again what has been repeatedly stated, that, with a few exceptions, the causes for the continuance of the old and the formation of new groups must be sought in directions other than in their having study programs peculiarly fitted to their interests and needs.

#### 4. INFORMAL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

The discussions at business or executive conferences may be the most educative process in some of the groups. The business meetings of one of the early groups were remembered by a charter member as the prime feature of the class activities. Of another group<sup>1</sup> a teacher wrote: "The monthly executive committee meetings held at home on a week night are attended by from twelve to thirty members. In concentration on the subject discussed, and in wisdom of decision, they outrank many Y M C A and church board meetings which have been attended. They are also punctuated with delicious humor." At one time there were twelve working committees in this group.

Such business meetings illustrate an educational technique which is frequently recommended by those skilled in leading discussion groups, and which is based upon a sound edu-

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1. In the Wilshire Boulevard Christian Church.

cational psychology.<sup>1</sup> A member presides. A problem is presented and analyzed by an officer or a committee chairman. The relevant facts are asked for. The opinions and feelings of the group are explored. Solutions are proposed and discussed in terms of their possible consequences. A conclusion is reached. The committee is instructed to carry out the decision. Before the next executive meeting the committee has acted. If the matter is important the action taken is reported and, if further or revised action is needed, the preceding process may be repeated.

This educational procedure was illustrated repeatedly at a September executive committee meeting of the Home Builders Class of the Hollywood-Beverly Christian Church, Los Angeles. Eighteen husbands and wives, mostly in their early thirties, met in the pastor's home to discuss the work of the class. The preponderance of men—ten to eight—gave to this meeting as well as to one of the Sunday class sessions of this same group a masculinity which is quite in contrast to the femininity of most so-called parents' classes the writer has attended. During the intense two hours the following took place:

The carefully prepared minutes of the previous executive committee meeting were read by the secretary, the wife of the head of a building and investment company.

The usual reports were made by the Promotion, Music, Social, Program and Good Cheer (sick visitation) committees and by the treasurer.

The elected president, who had thought he was too busy to undertake the responsibility, had been interviewed by the pastor. He reported his decision to accept the presidency.

1. Elliott, Harrison Sackett, *The Process of Group Thinking*. New York, Association Press, 1928, p. 35.  
Sheffield, Alfred Dwight, *Training for Group Experience*. New York, The Inquiry, 1929, pp. 4, 5.  
Dewey, John, *How We Think...* Boston, D. C. Heath and Company, 1933, p. 107.

Later in the evening this "busy" man proposed that the men of the class meet weekly for an informal luncheon club.

The suggestion was made that "tickets to the big November football game be given to the couple securing during October the largest number of new members for the class." This was left to the discretion of the membership committee. Later it was learned that the busy new president, by bringing four of the nine new members, won this \$6.60 prize which had been donated by one of the class officers.

After discussing a previous contest it was decided not to engage in further attendance contests with other church classes.

Landscaping the church grounds had been proposed at an earlier meeting. The men were to do the work and the women were to provide the encouragement and the food. But the work was so difficult and technical that the plan had been abandoned. It was decided to ask two expert gardeners in the church to make plans and estimate the cost of the initial job and the yearly upkeep.

The pastor reported the need of jobs for two married men, one a university graduate, "a special case," and the other a less educated man. As all the class members were now employed, the president asked the Placement Committee to assist Doctor Kleihauer.

How to make the Sunday opening program more effective and more devotional was discussed. No conclusion was reached. The class period was reported to be 9:30-10:40 a.m., although the opening was usually late.

Eight other matters, including the Sunday topics for the next quarter, were presented and considered. At eleven o'clock, after light refreshments, the group left for home.

Attendance at this and other similar committee discussions suggests that such meetings constitute an educational

or cultural factor of prime importance in the group life.<sup>1</sup> Not only are discussion techniques observed but other principles of adult education are carried out. More than in the Sunday lesson period, the members plan the program, do their own thinking and studying, share experience, and express themselves freely. Better learning would probably take place in the groups if some techniques of the business meetings could be injected into the regular study periods.

### 5. SUMMARY

Teachers for the groups have been drawn from a wide variety of occupations. Many of these leaders report that working with a class is a richly rewarding experience. Where one person, or a man and his wife, have given themselves generously to a group they and the members develop an intimacy like that of a big family.

Teachers, when their interest is aroused, find time for personal growth, for needed preparation and for intimate friendships with members of the group.

Lacking courses adapted to their special needs, more than half the groups resort to the International Uniform Lessons. No other courses are in general use.

Most of the teachers appear to give lectures followed by a few minutes of questions or remarks by class members. Members share little in program making for the study period, in preparation or in discussion at the class.

Some of the best learning takes place in informal gatherings, and especially at the class business or executive committee meetings.

If adequate resource materials for teachers and members can be supplied, increasingly effective educational procedure in the groups seems entirely possible.

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1. Cf. Busch, Henry M., *Leadership in Group Work*. New York, Association Press, 1934, pp. 138, 139.

## Chapter VI

# PLACE OF THE GROUPS IN THE CHURCH STRUCTURE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Having studied the types, origins and programs of the groups, we now turn to an analysis of the plans which churches are making to fit their groups into their church structures. In Chapter I it was suggested that the transition period of young people to adults is the most critical and in many cases the most neglected area in American Protestant religious education. This observation has been confirmed by contrasting the conditions in many churches which lack a plan for their young married couples with conditions in a few churches which have a planned procedure.

Where there is no plan the young people frequently drop out of the church at marriage and form extra-church groups. Or, if they remain in the church, they develop critical attitudes and may become a source of friction. Where, on the contrary, newly-wed young people and church officials have worked out a planned procedure there are found in the church well-attended groups of young couples, whose members are loyal to the church and integrated in the church life. The two types of situations are illustrated in the following case studies:

### 2. TYPICAL RESULTS OF A LACK OF PLANNING

One Sunday morning the writer visited a beautiful new church where there is a married group whose age range is thirty-two to forty-two. In answer to an inquiry regarding young married people, the Sunday School superintendent said: "We have just started the Older Young People's De-

partment. You will find young married couples there." This group was at once visited. Here the leader frankly explained: "There are no married people in this class. The interests of married couples are so different from ours that they do not come here. I know about fifteen young couples connected with the church but they won't join this group."

The superintendent thought that young couples would be found in the older young people's class; the pastor, on the other hand, thought they were in the older married group. He even went to the older class with the writer and asked how many present had been married less than five years. Nobody responded. For thirteen years this church has not organized a new young married people's class. Planning for young couples has been neglected. Naturally they are not in that church school.

In another splendidly equipped church, the leaders of the young married group and of the young people's department had never met and did not even know each other by name. In this same church there was a flourishing senior young people's class, out of which in one year eighteen couples were married. But these newly-weds were ignored by the young married people's class and were quickly out of place in the unmarried group. The church failed to harvest the fruit of years of work.

In another well staffed church the writer one Sunday morning asked for a guide. From class to class in the young people's and young adult groups he went inquiring for young married folk. They could not be found. In a thorough check by a church official of the total enrollment of this Sunday School, where attendance is over one thousand, only seventeen young married couples could be located. This church school had no adequate plan for its young married people.



At a small Los Angeles city church a Sunday morning visit revealed a strikingly inadequate program for the young married people. While there is in this church an active older group married an average of twelve years, with an average attendance of over thirty, this group is attracting few of the younger couples. These younger people, therefore, have come together in an extra-church social group in which they meet for bridge, dancing and social fellowship. Most of the members are still related to the church as occasional attendants, or contributors. But the minister reported that their drift is away from the church. Here again was the lack of an adequate technique for meeting the interests of the married couples during the very first months after their marriage.

Failure to plan the swarming flight of the young couples has resulted, in one case, in unnecessary friction. In one large church it was reported that many girls who had belonged to a high school group, which for several years a teacher had continued to lead, had been married. There was no plan in the church set-up for a special class for these young married folk. The result was that the girls rather abruptly left their former teacher and with their husbands went into a mixed class, which had grown up from a young men's class, where more than half of the members were married. The teacher of the mixed class reported that the other teacher would not speak to him because he had taken away her girls.

This gulf between youth and adulthood is also disturbing the leaders in parent education. "There is no provision in our social scheme," says a writer in the *Parent Education* magazine, "for a gradual initiation of youth into the daily world, no real provision for a process of growing up and becoming independent and self-sufficient—

Youth is apt to develop a general spirit of rebellion against home, family and parents."<sup>1</sup>

A similar attitude of rebellion against the church appeared in an experiment at Columbus, Ohio, where the church had previously had no adequate plan. In 1931, an experienced leader in adult education and the church pastor invited a group of young couples to meet at the parsonage for one evening and discuss their relations with the church. Here is a report of this conference:

And did they talk! They told everything they thought was wrong with the church, and that was plenty. They told how they needed sleep on Sunday mornings; that they had already heard many times over everything the Church has to say to them; that it took all the money they had just to get along, with their young children, and the depression, and unemployment; they could not take on any more obligations yet awhile, and the church always made them feel guilty about not giving money, more money than they could afford; that if they let themselves in for one thing at the church they were soon in for more than the original bargain; that their friends were not church people, all their friends enjoyed their lives in other ways than going to church; of course when they were older and their children should need parental models, they would probably feel then that they ought to join the Church.<sup>2</sup>

After, however, their interests were aroused, and a plan to meet their needs was made, the objections and difficulties they raised quickly vanished. Within a month the members of this critical group, of their own volition, had settled down to a regular 9:15 Sunday morning meeting, and many were soon contributing weekly to the work of the church.

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1. Taba, Hilda, "How Shall Education in Family Life Function in the General Scheme of Education for Youth?" *Parent Education*, Vol. 2, No. 2, May 15, 1935, p. 4.
  2. Charters, Jessie A., *Young Adults and the Church*. New York, The Abingdon Press, 1936, pp. 42, 43. Quoted by permission.

### 3. FOUR EXPERIMENTS IN A PLANNED PROCEDURE

In the First Methodist Church of Alhambra the pastor and the Sunday School superintendent, in conference with their young people, have located the young married group in the Junior Adult Department. This church of 1,200 members, with a Sunday School attendance of over 600, has organized the church school into the following sections and groups:

- Nursery, two groups, babies up to 2, children 2 and 3

- Beginners, 4-6, one class

- Primary, 6-8, four classes

- Junior, 9-11, eight classes

- Junior High, 12-13, four classes

- Senior High, 14-17, eight groups

- Young People of college age, five groups, three for young men, two for girls

- Junior Adult Department, in two groups:

  - Senior Young People's Class, The Second Milers, 20 and above, unmarried

  - YOUNG MARRIED PEOPLE'S CLASS, 20-28, organized in October, 1934

- Adult Department:

  - Home Builders, 25-35, organized as YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES, in 1930

  - Fidelis Class, 30-48, organized as YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES, in 1924

  - Wesleyans, 40-60, organized as Elderly Married People, in 1930

  - Loyal Workers, women 45-60

  - Keystone Class, women 60-80

  - Brotherhood Class, older men

  - A Home Department of thirty shut-ins

Early in 1934 this church adopted the "Unified Service." Under this plan the Sunday morning worship service is held

from 9:30 to 10:30. The whole Sunday School from Junior High through the Adult Department attends. It is the combined opening exercises of the Sunday School and the morning service of the church. In order to train them for later regular church attendance, the eight Junior classes, ages 9-11, once a month meet in their department and march in a body to the 9:30 service. At the close of the worship service at 10:30, ninety per cent of the attendants move promptly to the classes mentioned above. At 11:30 the church bell rings and in a few minutes all are on their way home or to the beaches and mountains for other desired Sunday re-creation. With the exception mentioned, the children up to eleven years of age have spent the entire two hours in their own classes or departments. Over half of the morning audience seemed, at the time of the writer's visit, to be young people and young adults under thirty-five to forty years of age. There were many of high school and college age. Forty per cent or more were men and boys. This contrasts strikingly with the aged and feminine appearance of many church audiences.

The pastor and the Sunday School superintendent were enthusiastic supporters of this Unified Service. Very few elderly people have dropped out, they said, but many more of the young people, and *twice as many members of the married people's groups*, are attending the morning service. One other church in this community has made the change, and others are considering it.<sup>1</sup> This method of integrating Sunday worship and study seems to have met

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1. The "Unified Morning Service" seems to have been started first in Southern California on November 5, 1933, by the First M.E. Church of Glendale. Many others are now experimenting with the plan. In one community on the same Sunday four churches of different denominations changed to this order of service.

"Some attempts at Unifying the Sunday Morning Program" are also reported in *International Curriculum Guide, Book Six, The Organization and Administration of Christian Education in the Local Church*.

the criticism, discussed in Chapter VIII, that adult group members fail to attend the preaching service.

This is the setting for three graded married people's groups which began as young couples' classes, the oldest in 1924, the youngest in October, 1934.

The pastor and Sunday School superintendent were questioned as to their method of swarming off a young couples' group. They replied that the minister occasionally teaches the unmarried young people's classes and tries to "build up a psychology so that when married they will naturally go into the young married people's class." He also aims to develop a willingness in the unmarried members to see their married friends advance to their own group. It is the church's policy to start a new young married couples' class in the Junior Adult Department every four or five years. The older group then automatically advances into the Adult Department.

In several churches the question has been asked: "Are there enough young married couples to make up a class and at the same time to provide the necessary leaders for the Sunday School? This church superintendent met this problem: "We watch not to deplete leadership in these young classes before they are well established." From members of the Fidelis, or third older class, ages thirty to forty-eight, the leadership of the church school is largely recruited.

The above account of one church's program has been given in detail to indicate the completeness of educational

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Chicago, The International Council of Religious Education, 1935, pp. 36, 37.

Anderson, Robert Grant, *The Unified Sunday Morning Church Service*. New York, The Abingdon Press, 1936, price 25c.

Cf. also *The Unified Service*, pamphlet published in 1935 by the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia. Valuable Bibliography.

organization, and the place in the total church structure of the young married people's group. It should be added that in this church, as in others already reported, individual couples do not graduate from one married group to the other. Each group raises its upper age limit an average of one year every twelve months. Every three to eight years, as the need appears, the new young couple's group is formed.

In two other well-organized churches, the Santa Ana First Methodist and the Huntington Park Methodist, there are five married groups. In each of these churches the youngest group is a part of the "Young People's Department." For their opening worship all in this department assemble in one room. For the study period the married couples meet together. In the former church the unmarried meet in separate classes for young men and young women. But in the latter church the unmarried meet in one mixed group. In the Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of Los Angeles, where there are other married groups, the young married people's class is a section of the Older Young People's Department. For the study period the married couples meet by themselves, and the unmarried meet separately in a men's class and a women's class. When there is a wedding there is, therefore, a natural move into the married group. A similar series of two or more married classes can be found in twenty-nine other churches listed in Appendix E. But in the above four cases a planned relation with the church seems most clearly thought out.

The normal result of such planning should be in twenty years to find in some churches six or eight married couples' groups, each with its specialized interests, but integrated in the whole church structure.

## 4. HOW THE GROUPS SERVE THEIR CHURCHES

(1) *Service to the Church by Group Members*

TABLE 11

Item	No. Groups Reporting	Totals Reported	Average for Group
<b>Members serving in the church.....</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>3,824</b>	<b>18</b>
Members teaching in the S. S.....	165	1,030	6.2
Members singing in the choir.....	148	871	6
Members on official boards.....		367	
Leaders of women's societies.....		89	
Minor officers in Sunday School.....		56	
Ushers .....		46	
Musicians .....		34	
Members of church committees.....		33	
Leaders of young people's groups .....		29	
Men's club officers.....		22	
Sunday School superintendents.....		21	
Boys' group leaders.....		18	
Girls' group leaders.....		13	
Miscellaneous .....		19	
Others "Active in the Church".....		150	
Others, activity not mentioned.....		1,026	

Of a total membership of 13,368 in all the married groups, 3,824, or 28.6 percent, were thus reported as serving in some part of the church work other than in their own class or club. In the Young groups the average number was 13.3, in the Second Older groups, 20.7, and in the Third, Fourth and Fifth Older groups, 34. Thus as the organizations have matured their services to the church have increased.

The groups reported 1,030 teaching in the Sunday School and 871 singing in the choir. In incomplete replies to the question, "What do others do?" 897 others were reported as working for the church in the other positions listed in Table 11. The figures in this table and the observation

of the writer strikingly suggest, therefore, that one way to aid in building up a church and in securing its lay leadership is to form periodically a young married people's group, and so serve its members that they will later turn around and serve the church.

*(2) Illustrations of Groups Serving Their Churches*

The Parents' Class of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church sent superintendents and teachers to all departments of the Sunday School that requested them. The pre-school department of the Sunday School was started with leadership recruited from the class. In all, sixty Sunday School teachers have been sent out from the group. The new dramatic department of the church started seven years ago in this class. In the group have developed church elders, ushers, members of the executive board, Boy Scout leaders, Girl Reserve counselors, women's society officers and church callers. A children's choir was sponsored and sixty vestments made.

The Mount Hollywood Congregational Church class sponsors the nursery and cradle roll departments of the Sunday School. A supervisor for little children is employed during the church period. When the Whittier Methodist Church built its spacious educational building the Two-in-One Class raised a third of the fund. In the fall every-member canvass of the First Baptist Church of Glendale the Neogamus Class team brought in more pledges than the other three teams combined. Twenty-two members of this Second Older group teach in the Sunday School. The One-onta Congregational Church Two-By-Two Club started the church paper and financed it for two years. This same club sponsored the church night dinner, which was later taken over by the church. The men of the Atascadero Two-By-Two Fellowship painted the church annex. The group presented an Easter pageant written by the pastor. Some classes have sick funds from which hospital expenses of



class members are paid. One class purchased a wheel chair for a paralytic member, and later gave it to the church.

The groups have helped their churches by helping members in trouble, as the following instances illustrate: In one of the older groups it was reported that only one person had ever been known to bring reproach to the group. When he became financially embarrassed and lacked \$5,000, he forged signatures for this amount. Four men from the class investigated the situation and provided the necessary amount to meet the creditor's demands. Before the case was publicized the problem was met. The man who was close to a jail sentence is now an active worker in the church and is making good in business life. Nobody in the church apparently knew of the incident except the four men who loaned the money.

From another group came this story of kindly aid: Six years ago one of the husbands developed tuberculosis and the family was obliged to move into the country. Men of the class went to this new home on Sunday afternoons, chopped the wood, built a chicken coop and cleaned up the grounds—work which the sick man was physically unable to do. Later the man died, but his widow stayed with the class. In the group she met a widower. They were friends together in the class for one and one-half years. Now they are married and have established their own home.

A member of another group who was working for the State secured emergency employment for three members who needed jobs. In this way two of the three were led to satisfactory permanent positions.

## 5. SUMMARY

Where church leaders have definitely planned to swarm off the married from the unmarried young people and to integrate the young married people's group in the whole church life, the group has fitted into the church structure.

Where such planning is neglected the young married couples tend to drift away or to become an element of friction within the church. Where, on the other hand, attention is given to training the group members they become supporters of the varied activities of the church.

One pastor of a church which had a large debt, and which had lost many of its financial supporters, wrote of the married class organized five years previously:

During the first few months of my second ministry at Wilshire Boulevard Christian Church, when the burdens seemed unbearable, it was from the YMPC<sup>1</sup> that I gathered much inspiration to carry on. As I realized the possibilities of this splendid group it gave me new heart and increased determination. From this class come many of the best workers of the church.

When this was written, thirteen members were teaching in the Sunday School and seventeen more filled other church positions.

In these various ways nearly 4,000 men and women from 212 groups are serving their churches. The potentialities of these young and middle-aged people, many of them in the period when the biological urge is at its height, cannot be overestimated. If the warm blood of their vital interests is once stirred, the busiest of them find time and energy for enormous tasks.

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1. Young Married People's Class.

## Chapter VII

### FIVE BASIC QUESTIONS SUGGESTED BY THIS STUDY

In Chapters II to VI reports have been presented of group types, purposes, programs, educational procedures, and the relations of the groups to their churches. These aspects of the groups will now be re-examined in order to build up a background of conviction against which the data of this study, or a new plan for young married people's work, may be cast. An answer will be sought to five questions:

#### 1. WHAT TYPE OF GROUP IS MOST DESIRABLE?

If a church plans group activities for young married people, what type of group should it select? The groups found in this study have been formed on a basis of congenial social fellowship due to similarity in age and marital state, and in cultural and educational standards. The courses of study used, such as the International Uniform Lessons and the general studies in the Old and New Testament, have not been the primary basis of the group bond. Even the thirty offerings reported on Marriage and the Home and on Problems of the Social Order (cf. pp. 75, 76) have been interest studies carried on in a fellowship group. The question now to be faced is whether the ongoing group of married couples of similar age and similar length of marriage is the best type for a church to adopt.

Many religious educators have advocated a fluid type of group which meets around a particular problem. When the study of that problem is completed the group breaks up and reorganizes about another topic with a changed personnel. The International Council of Religious Education in its recent adult manual supports this point of

view: "It would seem wise to have all the groupings within the adult constituency definitely functional and of a non-permanent or periodic character."<sup>1</sup> Theoretically this has been considered an ideal form of adult education. People who desire to study some particular question meet and remain together until their interest has been satisfied.

The question, then, is: For the development of the most satisfying programs shall churches make congenial fellowship or a temporary interest the primary basis of adult group organization? The answer seems to be found in the groups in which an able leader has combined the cohesiveness of warm social fellowship with a shared educational approach to common issues such as Marriage, Parenthood, and Social Change. This wise combination of fellowship and special interest has resulted in personal growth of a high order. (Cf. pp. 49-60.)

In other instances a few fellowship group members have together attended community parents' classes where their special need was met. From one class a sub-group was formed by a doctor to study sex education for little children. In at least two churches, where there are several fellowship groups, a short series of interest groups for the whole church is planned annually or as often as a need arises.

This adaptation in a few cases of the techniques of the fluid groups to the fellowship groups suggests the possibility that all groups may in this way more adequately meet the needs of their members. Thus the values of permanent fellowship and the satisfactions of having live interests discussed may be combined in the educational process.

An ongoing fellowship group, therefore, of like kind, similar in age, in duration of marriage, in age of children

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1. *International Curriculum Guide, Book Four, Christian Education of Adults*, 1934, p. 126.

and in cultural and educational standards seems to be the best type. Too great a spread in any one of these items detracts from membership satisfaction. These associations continue from year to year, adding new members of similar age. There is no graduating from a younger to an older group. In the groups studied there is a general uniformity of organization. All have members, officers, and committees, and nearly all have a regular teacher or leader. Nearly all prefer informality. There are few constitutions.

This conclusion that a continuing friendship group, in which the members meet together mutually felt problems, is most desirable, is confirmed by the observation of a recent writer. He says: "The trend toward unrestrained interest grouping" has swung too far. A return to "the solidarity pattern is due to follow."<sup>1</sup>

Other writers bear witness to the sociological and psychological values of group membership. Professor Lindeman, several years ago, wrote:

The individual of the modern world who has no vital adherence to and expression through a group is an individual who plays a diminishing role; he is insignificant and unimportant to the social process in direct proportion to his lack of membership in a functioning group.<sup>2</sup>

In a similar vein a sociologist writes:

Almost everything we do, excepting the purely vegetative functions, is done *with, to, for, or on account of somebody*.<sup>3</sup>

Other writers add their testimony to the importance of human fellowship:

No individual can arrive even at the threshold of his potentialities without a culture in which he participates.<sup>4</sup>

1. Weatherby, V. A., "Multiple Groupings and Loyalty Patterns," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 40, September, 1934, p. 213.
2. Lindeman, Eduard C., *Social Discovery*. New York, Republic Publishing Company, 1925, p. 111.
3. Finney, Ross L., *Sociological Philosophy of Education*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1929, p. 57.
4. Benedict, Ruth, *Patterns of Culture*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1934, p. 253.

Normal humanity must have social relationships to make life livable.<sup>1</sup>

Group membership in some form is thus almost an essential for human living.

That the spirit and practice of friendship are needed today more than anything else is the thesis of a recent book. Says the writer:

The desire for fellowship is elemental and constitutive of human nature. The great generic bond that makes the world consciously kin is the will to friendship. It is the heart's desire. . . Friendship enriches life. Rather it is indispensable to life. Each might profitably exclaim—"what were I without my friends!" . . . In the friendly relation . . . the will of each is the well-being of the other. . . . Neither (personality) is what it would have been in isolation. . . . Persons are emergents within a correlated whole.<sup>2</sup>

In public school adult education classes the value of fellowship is acknowledged:

The teachers of adult classes who recognize the desire for fellowship as a primary interest of adults get better results in their classes than those who neglect this aspect of their work!<sup>3</sup>

The pastor of the Santa Ana Methodist Church in which are five married groups said to the writer:

Religion is a product of fellowship. At no time in the total life can group fellowship be neglected without loss.

The values in fellowship are not new discoveries in the Christian church. In the London magazine in 1760 a letter from John Wesley appeared. He wrote:

About thirty years since, I met with a book called *The Country Parson's Advice to His Parishioners*. There I read these words: "If good men of the church will unite to-

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1. MacIver, R. M., *Society: Its Structure and Changes*. New York, Ray Long and Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1933, p. 9.
  2. Martin, Herbert, *A Philosophy of Friendship*. New York, The Dial Press, 1935, pp. 194, 197, 199.
  3. Detter, Ralph W., Supervisor of Special Day Classes for Adults, Los Angeles City High School District, in a personal letter, October 24, 1935.

gether . . . disposing themselves into friendly societies . . . to be helpful to each other in all good Christian ways, it will be the most effectual means for restoring our decaying Christianity to its primitive life and vigor, and the supporting of a tottering and sinking church."

The book which Wesley read and which so profoundly influenced him was first published in 1680.<sup>1</sup> Two hundred and fifty years later another book appeared in which a modern minister wrote that the revival of the religious life of our churches awaits the creation of a program of inner group life.<sup>2</sup>

This bond of comradeship is basic to the Oxford Group Movement. In the principle of "sharing" and in the "house parties" have been adopted the values of friendship for spiritual growth. It has been questioned whether this movement would have arisen had there been in the program of the churches an adequate emphasis on fellowship groups. During a house party the writer invited an Oxford group leader to address a young married people's class. The comment of the class was that the speaker had described what the class was already doing.

Whether such fellowship groups grow up in the church or elsewhere depends upon the keenness or the lethargy of the church. In the long run the group which brings the largest satisfactions will become the dominant group for an individual. Whether the group which an individual joins is related to the school, to industry such as a labor union, to recreation such as a country club, to politics, to the home, or to the church will depend upon the degree of satisfaction the member feels.<sup>3</sup> Satisfying membership in

1. Simon, John S., *John Wesley and the Religious Societies*. London, The Epworth Press, J. Alfred Sharp, 1921, p. 9.
2. Read, Ralph H., *The Younger Churchmen Look at the Church*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1935, pp. 306-308.
3. Soares, Theodore Gerald, *Religious Education*. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1928, pp. 82-89.

an ongoing, congenial group, in which each member feels that the other members are facing problems similar to his own, is one of the basic needs of people.

## 2. HOW MAY THE PURPOSE OF A GROUP BE TESTED?

In the study of motives for forming the groups there was little evidence of adequate thinking in the churches on fundamental group objectives. Somewhat fortuitously these associations have grown up around the desire for fellowship. Most of the organizers evidently hoped that in some vague way members' problems might be solved by a study of the Bible. The groups are also regarded as a method of holding young people in the church and getting them to serve on church boards and in the Sunday School. But a fundamental philosophy of what the groups should aim to do to the members has been lacking. It was concluded, therefore, that "excepting the satisfaction of friendship needs, the deepest wants of the members are largely overlooked." (Cf. p. 39.)

It is assumed that the purpose of a group should be to meet vital needs. It is not expected that each group will be aiming to satisfy all the desires of all the members, all of the time. But it is assumed that the true objective of a group is to give guidance in meeting what seem at the time to be the members' uppermost or most critical current needs. Human wants are, to be sure, complicated in their origins. Some, such as the desire for food, for coolness during heat, and for the relief of pain, go back to bodily tissue needs. The desire for a standard of living similar to that of one's neighbor is obviously social in its source. But whether the felt wants are biological, psychological or sociological in their origin, they are real. The purpose of a group, therefore, should be to meet these wants in ways that will make for the largest possible individual, group and community satisfaction.



The fundamental wants of people are sometimes called drives, urges, appetites, interests, excitements, tensions, concerns, or longings. They obviously center in feeling and emotion. Failure to reach these inner conscious and unconscious springs of life is one cause of much of the futility in educational activity.

Under the following nine heads an attempt is made to analyze some of the most fundamental human wants, and the social setting in which their satisfaction may be found:<sup>1</sup>

(1) *Security in Obtaining Food, Clothing and Shelter and in Avoiding Pain.*

All persons desire to maintain a minimum standard of living, of health and of safety, consistent with the accepted norms of their community. Group members in some instances have been aided in hospitalization, in securing jobs and in other material ways. (Cf. pp. 89-91.) The responsibility of helping members find security by adjusting vocations to changes in business, industry and the professions seems to be accepted by some groups. Before the depression, however, it was taken for granted that everybody had a job and that each family's material needs were being supplied. But the scourge of stark poverty which has swept over the country has raised the question of responsibility not only for immediate needs for food, clothing and shelter, but for the reorganization of business and indus-

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1. This list has been suggested from the following and other sources:  
 Allport, Floyd, *Social Psychology*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924, pp. 50, 80.  
 Dashiell, John Frederick, *Fundamentals of Objective Psychology*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1929. Chapter IX, "Motivation."  
 Hartshorne, Hugh, *Character in Human Relations*. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933. Part III, "Character as Effective Functioning," pp. 189-278.  
 Snedden, David, "Education for the Seven Careers of Men of Today," *School and Society*, Vol. 43, No. 1122, June 27, 1936, p. 864ff.  
 Elliott, Harrison Sackett, and Elliott, Grace Loucks, *Solving Personal Problems*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1936, pp. 49-59.

try, so that relief will in the future be unnecessary. A group's purpose must be wrong if it abstractly studies the Old Testament while its families go hungry, while strikes decimate its membership and closed factories throw efficient men on relief. Under such circumstances immediate relief and fundamental social reconstruction must both be included in the purpose of a group.

(2) *Friendship and Sympathy.* From birth to death every individual wants to be wanted and to find comradeship, first in his family, then in his play group, in his school and later in the adult groups to which he belongs. There is evidence that the groups studied have succeeded better in this regard than in any other aspect of their program.

(3) *Activity and Rest.* From birth to death every individual needs a rhythm or alternation of activity and rest. A child plays with intensity, then suddenly falls asleep. Adults take "a day off," an annual vacation or a sabbatical year. In the group activities studied, with few exceptions, inadequate attention was given to the physical exercise of members. No group reported special efforts to develop community opportunities for wholesome recreation. Also in the assignment of group responsibility it has been found that some members have all the activity and no rest, while others have all rest and no activity. Both are dissatisfied. The six-months-in-office followed by an out-of-office period is one plan for securing the desired rhythm. A technique, however, has yet to be invented for discovering in each group member the latent qualities which are awaiting self-expression; of assigning tasks which will draw out these qualities; and then of ending or changing the responsibility before weariness sets in.

(4) *Recognition and Praise.* One writer on child psychology believes that expressions of approval or disapproval by those we love may be one of the strongest motivating

forces in human life.<sup>1</sup> One pastor frequently told the executive committee of a group how greatly their work was appreciated by the church. In another group's record book the secretary had entered: "The pastor said to the members, if there was anything the class couldn't do he didn't know what it was."<sup>2</sup> Older church members, however, have been known to disparage the work of the younger group. Among the group members, also, there may be inadequate recognition of the work of individual officers and committeemen.

(5) *Thrills and Adventure.* In the American frontier life every day brought its thrill, especially to children. Watching and hunting wild animals and birds, the search for wild fruits, herding cattle, tending poultry, the birth and death of domestic animals, the changing seasons, floods, snows, and travel over rough roads—normal life was full of adventure. City life means that most legitimate thrills must be artificially provided by sports, excursions to factories, farms, mountains or the seashore, and in various forms of creative enterprises.

Among the group activities a few thrills were observed at social and business meetings and in an occasional service enterprise. One group prepared a list of possible community adventures. (Cf. p. 54.) But, on the whole, in the groups and in church and community organization, there are utterly inadequate adventure opportunities for either group members or their children.

As groups mature thrilling adventures may be undertaken in civic enterprises, politics, race and international relations, education for peace, and in the struggle for social change. While it is true that the right technique for social

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1. Morgan, John J. B., *Child Psychology*. New York, Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1931, p. 169.
  2. Two-In-One Class, First Methodist Church, Whittier.

action in civic affairs by church groups has yet to be created, without such effort a permanent adult group lacks one thrilling social outreach in its educational program.<sup>1</sup>

(6) *Sex Expression*. This powerful drive which is found in all animal life may be guided to give the highest satisfactions of which human beings are capable. In marriage, home and children, and sublimated in service to others this wholesome human urge finds its goal. In the study of group programs, however, there is little evidence that adequate direction has been given to this deep-seated human craving. Many church leaders entirely avoid responsibility for counsel regarding sex. In a "study of the marriage practices of over four hundred Protestant pastors in Southern California," it was found that "more than seventy per cent . . . made no attempt to inquire concerning any of these vital matters (health, finance, sex, etc.) before performing a wedding ceremony."<sup>2</sup> Suggestions for guidance in this area are given in Chapter VIII.

(7) *Opportunity to Serve*. Prince Kropotkin, the Russian sociologist, finds in both animal and human society an urge for mutual aid. Along with the struggle for existence he sees an inner urge to cooperate.<sup>3</sup> A biologist thinks that cooperation is a fundamental trait of living matter. "Many," he says, "of the so-called 'altruistic' drives in man apparently are the development of these innate tendencies toward cooperation, which find their early physiological expression in all sorts of simpler animals."<sup>4</sup>

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1. Cf. *International Curriculum Guide, Book One, Principles and Objectives of Christian Education*. Chicago, The International Council of Religious Education, 1932, p. 97.
  2. Butterfield, Oliver M., "Blind Marriages," *The Christian Advocate*, New York, July 12, 1934.
  3. Kropotkin, P., *Mutual Aid, A Factor of Evolution*. New York, Alfred A Knopf, 1925.
  4. Allee, W. C., "Cooperation Among Animals," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 37, November, 1931, p. 395.

A few groups, through projects in community cooperation, have given members an opportunity to carry out this urge to serve. One club sponsored a series of lectures on family relations out of which grew a permanent annual community forum. Another class contributed toward the furnishing of a community hospital. The leader of one class which had been organized for more than twenty years remarked: "There is nothing good which goes on in our community without some member of this group being connected with it"<sup>1</sup> More than one fourth of the group members were reported as engaged in church tasks other than their own group activities. (Cf. p. 89.)

While there are these exceptions it is probably true that members would find satisfaction in many more opportunities for interesting service to others in the group, the church and the community. It has even been suggested by a student of "the last half of life" that the failure to form habits of cooperative service in early adulthood tends to restlessness, morbidity, and barrenness in the later years.<sup>2</sup>

(8) *Freedom*. From the hour of birth, growth is a struggle to attain freedom. If held tightly a baby struggles and screams. Children run away from home. Adults resign from groups. The thirteen colonies revolted. The purpose of many laws is to curtail little freedoms in order that larger and more general freedom may result.

Young married people, in their groups and in their community, are seeking freedom for legitimate self-expression, for adventurous study of controversial questions and for experiment in church and community enterprises. They resent domination by other sectors of the church, or by other community groups.

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1. Two-In-One Class, First Methodist Church, Whittier.

2. Elliott, Grace Loucks, *Women After Forty*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1936, pp. 16, 17.

(9) *The Feeling of At-one-ness with the Forces of the Universe.* One group president naively remarked: "The basic purpose of our class is to help the members get right with God." Said St. Augustine: "Our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee." Whether God is conceived as the "character of order in the universe," as a "process," as a "principle," as "creator," or as "Our Father," to be in right relations with Him has ever been a human want. The church should be the best place in which to satisfy this desire. The degree, therefore, to which the purpose of the group is to help members think clearly regarding the universe and adjust their lives to these conceptions is one test of a group's value.

No group purpose, therefore, can be adequate if it fails to aim, through the group, the church and the community, to aid its members in securing balanced and integrated satisfactions of these fundamental wants or drives, which in the Christian conception are urges implanted by God.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. HOW MAY THE CURRICULUM OF A GROUP BE EVALUATED?

When the purpose of a group has been determined, the curriculum or what the group does, can be evaluated by the degree in which it carries out the purpose. If the purpose of the group is to help satisfy members' needs in the order which the group considers most important and most pressing, then the curriculum will deal with these needs. But in most cases, as reported in Chapter V, topics studied seem unrelated to life. Of 195 groups reporting courses of study used, 107 followed the International Uniform Lessons all the time and thirty-two others a part of the time. Thus at least 71 percent of the groups use courses of study which

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1. No list of the complex urges of human beings will ever be complete. The above may suggest to a group that they prepare their own list to guide their purpose.

are prepared months or years in advance to be taught on a certain Sunday. Such lessons cannot as a rule meet vital, pressing needs of members.

From the practice in a few progressive groups, however, and from other sources three criteria for curriculum selection may be suggested:

(1) *The curriculum will be inclusive.*

In the previous section on group purpose it was suggested that there are nine human wants or urges the satisfaction of which a group should take into consideration. These urges function in human relationships. They find their satisfaction in all sorts of experience. The International Council of Religious Education has suggested that there are eleven areas of experience with which religious education deals: (a) Religion, (b) Health, (c) Education, (d) Economics, (e) Vocation, (f) Citizenship, (g) Recreation, (h) Sex, Parenthood and Family Life, (i) Group Life, (j) Friendship, (k) Aesthetics.<sup>1</sup> An inclusive group curriculum, therefore, will be concerned with the satisfaction of human urges as they function in the various areas of human experience.

A voice, speaking for the church, has confirmed the above conception of inclusiveness: "Our churches must realize, and that right soon, that religion must come into all aspects of life or it will soon be crowded out of every aspect of it."<sup>2</sup> Another says of the broad responsibilities of the church: "Wherever society has failed to supply the necessary facilities for physical, mental and spiritual well-being the church has asserted its right to fill the gap."<sup>3</sup>

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1. *International Curriculum Guide, Book One. Principles and Objectives of Christian Education.* Chicago, International Council of Religious Education, 1932, pp. 97-105.
  2. Chaffee, E. G., *The Protestant Churches and the Industrial Crisis.* New York, The Macmillan Company, 1933, p. 12.
  3. Morse, Herman N., *Home Missions Today and Tomorrow.* New York, Home Missions Council, 1934, p. 6.

A group which accepts responsibility for meeting all human wants in all the areas of experience may be quite perplexed where to begin. Another principle, however, has been suggested:

(2) *The curriculum will seek to meet only the otherwise inadequately met needs of members.*

It will avoid duplicating what is already adequately supplied by other community agencies.

A worker with young people writes: "Wherever the church finds a type of activity provided in the community life, it will not be led into duplicating such an activity merely by the desire that individuals should have that experience under its auspices."<sup>1</sup>

A group of church leaders makes a similar suggestion: "Wherever a need to which the church is ministering can be met with equal satisfaction by the state or by some private agency, that particular function ought to be surrendered by the church."<sup>2</sup>

A third criterion further limits the selection.

(3) *Members' needs will be met in the order of importance and of felt intensity.*

Accurate devices for discovering the depth of group interests are not available. But those responsible for the program will be watchful for signs of wistfulness and expressions of need. They will spend time with the members, attend their socials and keenly hunt for the important vital needs which the group program can attempt to meet.

A group, then, should select its curriculum on the principle that its function is to meet members' needs and to promote their growth in all the areas of their experience.

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1. Herriott, Frank W., *A Community Serves Its Youth*. New York, Privately published, 1933, p. 175.

2. From the findings of the study conference of Methodist leaders, held at Delaware, Ohio, June, 1931. *The Christian Century*, Vol. 48, July 22, 1931, pp. 943, 944.



But it will aim to meet their inadequately met needs in the order of importance for their highest satisfaction and usefulness, and with careful regard to the intensity of interest at the time.

#### 4. WHAT TEACHING PRINCIPLES SHOULD BE FOLLOWED IN THE GROUPS?

As these are adult groups, the principles found effective in adult education should be applied.

(1) *The students should do their own learning.*

Learning can not be given by the teacher. He can only help to arrange conditions, and guide the student to the needed facts and resources. This is one reason why young married people like to meet by themselves. Older people have had so much more experience that they would gladly give their solutions to the younger folk. But the problems of young adults will not be solved until they have done their own studying and thinking. In most of the groups, however, there is so little evidence of member preparation and thinking that it is doubtful whether much real problem solving is taking place in formal class activities.

(2) *The members should participate in planning the program.*

Planning in the executive or business meetings has been referred to as a rewarding experience. (Cf. pp. 77-80.) But for the Sunday lessons the topics are frequently selected by the teacher or taken from the printed quarterly. A radical change to a system by which the members more significantly cooperate in planning the lessons needs to be made.

(3) *There should be more sharing of experience.*

Listening to a Bible lesson may not reach down to any vital want. But the live conversations before and after the formal class periods are real exchanges of experience. "The resource of largest value in adult education is the learn-

er's experience."<sup>1</sup> The groups need far more of this interchange in their class periods.

(4) *There should be freedom of expression and investigation.*

One enthusiastic group member said: "We speak with utter frankness." But in many groups visited there seemed to be a feeling of restraint. In some cases it was feared that church officials might criticize both the topics presented and questions the members might ask.

(5) *There should be adequate opportunities for discussion.*

An experienced adult educator suggests that discussion, or other similar interaction, should accompany all educational activities for mature people. "Since adult education is essentially self-education, it should practically always provide," he says, "an opportunity for the student to express himself on the material under consideration; and, if possible, he ought to have the chance of challenging his teacher."<sup>2</sup> A recent publication wisely questions the educational adequacy of getting by absorption through an exclusively "listening experience."<sup>3</sup>

In many churches there seems to be a belief that whatever religious education adults need can be obtained in the preaching service or service of worship. Such a policy fails to recognize other necessary elements of adult growth. "Modern pulpit messages," says Dr. Douglas Horton, "stress two emphases, one that aims to develop the devo-

1. Hallenbeck, Wilbur C., *Urban Organization of Protestantism*. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1934, p. 238.
2. Lyman Bryson, in a lecture at Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934.
3. *International Curriculum Guide, Book Six. The Organization and Administration of Christian Education in the Local Church*. Chicago, The International Council of Religious Education, 1935, pp. 35, 36.

tional life and the other that aims at bringing the hearer to a strong decision of the will."<sup>1</sup>

While devoutness and decision are important aspects of religious experience, opportunities to explore vital problems through personal study and discussion should be offered to adults by the church.

(6) *The door should be opened to new interests and experiences; new skills, appreciations and insights.*

"The teacher is just as truly to guide the acquiring of interests which shall serve as future motives as to discover and select interests which will serve to meet the behavior emergency of the moment."<sup>2</sup> This also means the increase and broadening of interests in all sorts of hobbies, and appreciation of the best in music, the fine arts and literature. In this aspect of teaching the Pasadena Parent's Class (Cf. pp. 51-56) has done effective work. But most of the groups fail to give much help to members in opening the door to new interests, new hobbies or new appreciations.

(7) *Higher and progressive standards of educational technique will be called for.*

Two facts point to this conclusion: First, the increasing number of students in secondary and higher institutions of learning means that the coming generation of young adults in the churches will have a rapidly enlarging educational background. A recent estimate gives the enrollment in public and private secondary schools at 6,305,000, while the number in normal schools, junior colleges, colleges and universities, including summer sessions, is 1,637,817.<sup>3</sup> Fif-

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1. *The Christian Century*, October 16, 1935, p. 1321.

2. Tuttle, H. S., "Character Education," *Religious Education*, Vol. 26, No. 7, October 31, 1931, p. 633.

3. *Information Service*, February 8, 1936. Published by the Federal Council of Churches, New York.

ty-two percent of the adolescents,<sup>1</sup> or more than eight times as many as in 1900, are enrolled in secondary schools today. In some states all adolescents are required to finish high school.

Secondly, technological development has thrown the world into a turmoil of rapid change. This cannot be avoided. Yet change is feared because it is not understood. If the church is to interpret social change and generate the dynamic for social guidance, as her leaders often assert she should, she must give an education adapted to a changing economy of mechanization and rapid tempo, not to an age of scarcity and of unchanging obedience to tradition.<sup>2</sup> This new emphasis on preparation for change is a frequent note in recent literature.

"The education of tomorrow," says Professor Martin, "will not consist of indoctrination in ancient attitudes and ideals, as though our world were static, but in the development, through sympathetic understanding, of capacity for creative and inventive dealing with the changed and changing conditions of our modern world."<sup>3</sup> If, then, these church groups are to influence educated persons, teaching technique must keep pace with social changes and the advancing standards of modern education.

## 5. IN WHAT WAYS IS THE CHURCH FITTED FOR GROUP WORK WITH YOUNG MARRIED PEOPLE?

This study has shown that for twenty-eight years Protestant churches have provided a congenial climate in which young married people's groups have grown. The question

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1. Woelfel, Norman, *Molders of the American Mind*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1933, p. 30.

2. Hart, Joseph K., *Education for an Age of Power*. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1935, pp. 30, 229.

3. Martin, Herbert, *A Philosophy of Friendship*. New York, The Dial Press, 1935, p. 2.

may be asked: In what respects is the church specially fitted to carry on rewarding educational activities for young married people? Several answers can be given:

(1) *From the early days of the nation a church has been established in practically every locality.*

When new real estate subdivisions are opened, a lot is often set aside for the community church. Families moving into a new area inquire regarding church facilities. In large cities where there are many almost independent communities it is customary in each to establish schools, stores, recreation facilities, police and fire protection and churches. The traditional prestige and historical momentum of the church give it many favorable contacts.

(2) *Young husbands and wives in great numbers are always within the field of the ministrations of the church.*

From the twenty millions in the Sunday Schools, and from outsiders who come to the minister to be married, a continuous stream of young married couples is pouring into the church constituency. Of the 1,200,000 weddings taking place yearly in the United States,<sup>1</sup> a large percentage are related to the Protestant churches, the membership of which is 35,600,000.<sup>2</sup> Newly married couples, therefore, are always at the church door. The church can choose either to adapt its program to their interests and needs or to turn them away unserved.

(3) *The church is the center about which many family habits have been built.* Most marriages are performed in the church or by the church minister. Thus for most couples the first step in family life, when emotions are deeply stirred, is taken under church auspices. Young children are baptized or consecrated in the church. As in the case of marriage, it is a time of emotional sensitiveness on the part

1. *The World Almanac*, 1935, p. 283.

2. *Federal Council Bulletin*, Vol. 19, No. 7, September, 1936, p. 4.

of the parents. Most funerals are conducted in the church or by the church minister. Such family events are also accompanied by the stirring of deep springs of feeling. It is still a tradition in many families, even where the parents have ceased to attend church, that children of school age "ought to go to Sunday School."

Thus at three of life's emotional crises—birth, marriage and death—and in the Sunday School, it is customary for the church to have most intimate contacts with families. If these four ministrations to young couples, their relatives and their children, are rendered in a friendly and efficient manner, they will develop in the participants a favorable attitude toward the church.

(4) *By an adjustment in the present activities for adults the church could readily undertake a program of education for young married people.* Already more than 5,000,000 adults are enrolled in Sunday Schools.<sup>1</sup> Including Jews and Catholics, 48.2 percent of the adult males and 62.9 percent of the adult females of the nation are church members.<sup>2</sup> It has been suggested, therefore, that the churches are already the scene of more continuous adult education than any other organization.<sup>3</sup> By creating a young married people's section within the already established adult department of the church, the needs of this group could be met without any upheaval in church organization.

(5) *In buildings and leadership many churches are equipped to meet the needs of young home makers.* Church property in the United States is valued at \$4,000,000,000.<sup>4</sup> There is idle church equipment, including gym-

1. Zeigler, Earl F., *Toward Understanding Adults*. Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1934, p. 164.

2. Douglas, H. Paul, and Brunner, Edmund de S., *The Protestant Church as A Social Institution*. New York, Harper and Brothers, 1935, p. 42.

3. Carrier, Blanche, "Self-Reliance," *Journal of Adult Education*, Vol 8, No. 1, January, 1936, p. 65.

4. The World Almanac, 1935, p 428.

nasiums and recreation halls, where new groups could meet and carry on their programs. Of the more than 200,000 clergymen, many, if their interests were aroused, could provide the needed leadership. Some who are giving disproportionate time to the older members of the church might give more attention to young married couples. In one church, while two gowned clergymen and the organist were ministering to fifteen elderly members, visiting speakers were leading discussions among 100 live young people. In some theological seminaries future ministers are receiving training in marriage and personal counseling which will help to qualify them for this type of leadership. Ministers' wives have often shown special qualifications. In this study, among the group leaders were found sixty-eight pastors and eighteen pastors' wives. (Cf. p. 63.)

In the church clientele are also other leadership resources. College, junior college, high school and other teachers, educated business and professional men and their wives are available in many communities. Among the group leaders found in this study were three college presidents, twenty college professors, four high school principals, eighteen high school and thirty-three other teachers, in addition to representatives from seventy-three other occupations.

(6) *One recognized function of the church is to provide for the members a satisfying spiritual fellowship.* Persons do not live in a vacuum. They cannot choose whether to live alone or with other people. Their only choice is with what sort of people they shall associate themselves. "Some sort of spiritual fellowship is as essential as the family or state or any other form of social organization."<sup>1</sup> This fellowship may become an unfailing resource for maintaining the spiritual fires needed to keep personal morals pure and

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1. Noyes, Morgan Phelps, in Read, Ralph H., *The Younger Churchmen Look at the Church*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1935, p. 247.

to refine the social institutions to which church members belong.<sup>1</sup>

Because of its insight into spiritual values and the infinite worth of persons, because of its heritage of art, poetry, music and biography, and because of its history of man's search for God and for concepts of the good life, the church should be one of the most uplifting fellowships to which an individual could belong.

(7) *Worship is the specialty of the church.* In worship the individual seeks to rid himself of whatever hinders awareness and appreciation of truth, beauty and goodness. Worship aids in the discovery of one's place in the scheme of things, in the totality of the universe. This gives a poise that is achieved from a sense of integration with all the aspects of life.

In Christian worship one experiences a purifying and dynamic contact with God through the aid of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. This imparts a warmth and richness to all human relations. It enables the individual to bring to bear upon human problems a new quality of experience. There is a genuine loss to the person in whose life this experience of fellowship in worship is lacking.

The church, therefore, in its worship aspects, may be the vehicle through which the individual becomes confidently oriented in the universe.

(8) *Because of the command to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, the church is an institution which is called upon to contrast what is with what ought to be.* In this dual command the church finds the necessity for making value judgments in both the individual and the social realm. The church, therefore, more than tax supported institutions which are subservient to the political commu-

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1. Johnson, F. Ernest, *The Church and Society*. New York, The Abingdon Press, 1935, pp. 84, 147, 155.



nity, can critically evaluate individual character and social institutions. In Christianity should be found the synthesis of the self-regarding and the social aspects of life.<sup>1</sup> The American church is struggling to harmonize this seeming dualism between the individual and social application of religion.<sup>2</sup>

The Federal Council of Churches, at its inception in 1908, adopted the "Social Ideals of the Churches." These were revised in 1912, ratified and reaffirmed in 1916 and 1919, and revised in 1932.<sup>3</sup> One denomination, the Congregational-Christian Church, has gone a step farther. In 1934 it organized a "Council for Social Action," by which it is seeking a method of positive functioning in influencing social change. Gradually the church is accepting its responsibility as "an active agent in the education and direction of the Christian conscience to deal on a Christian basis with all the practical affairs of life. . . . The Christian church is concerned about every human interest."<sup>4</sup>

(9) *Finally, it is the duty of the Christian church to enrich life in all its aspects.* "I came that they might have life, and might have it more abundantly," said Jesus.<sup>5</sup> Asceticism is no longer the aim of the church. Enrichment of living, with a balanced emphasis on the material, intellectual, social, esthetic and spiritual aspects, should be the aim of religion.

Due to the many favoring conditions, therefore, a modern church is equipped to meet the educational and fellow-

1. Johnson, F. Ernest, *The Church and Society*. New York, The Abingdon Press, 1935, p. 49.
2. Cf. "A Church in Peril of Its Soul." Editorial, *The Christian Century*, June 3, 1936, p. 790.
3. Cf. Pamphlet *Social Ideals of the Churches*. Federal Council of Churches, 105 East 22nd Street, New York, 1934.
4. Morse, Herman N., *Home Missions Today and Tomorrow*. New York, Home Missions Council, 1934, p. 6.
5. John 10:10.

ship needs of many young married people. For those who have had their early nurture in the church it is probably the best organization. It is also the only institution that is primarily charged with meeting the important religious needs, without the satisfaction of which the education of young married couples is not complete.

This does not imply that the church should seek to monopolize any aspect of community education. In its work for young married people the church should encourage any similar constructive activities of social agencies, neighborhood clubs, service clubs, women's clubs, public and private adult education, and especially the educational work of the Parent-Teacher Associations. Members of church married people's groups are frequently officers of such community organizations. But the church should recognize its advantageous position in this field and start an aggressive program to meet the most vital needs of the young married couples in its sphere of influence.

## 6. SUMMARY

From the data available, answers to the five questions raised in this chapter are:

(1) The most satisfactory type of church association for young married people is the ongoing fellowship group in which there is similarity in age, in length of marriage, in age of children, and in intellectual and cultural standards.

(2) The purpose of a group should be to guide the members in obtaining satisfaction of their fundamental wants.

(3) The curriculum should aim to meet members' needs in all the areas of their experience. But the program should include only otherwise inadequately met needs and in the order of their importance and of their felt intensity.

(4) The teaching principles which have proved effective in general education should be applied to these groups. There should be adequate opportunities for cooperation in

planning the program, sharing experience in discussion, and the development of new interests and insights through freedom of expression and investigation.

(5) The church is specially fitted to help in the continuous education of young married couples. It is a recognized community institution. Through its ministrations at birth, marriage and death, and in the Sunday School, it has intimate contacts with a large section of the population. As a center for worship and spiritual fellowship, and as a dynamic institution commanded by Jesus to enrich life in all its aspects, it has many favoring conditions. The church, therefore, should recognize its own advantageous position and its present neglect of young adults, and take positive steps to meet its responsibilities for young married people through fellowship groups adapted to their special interests and needs.



## Chapter VIII

# SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY FOR THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The data presented in this study have shown significant trends which focus on the question of the future function of the church. In churches where over a period of years attention has been given to young married people's groups, a new program emphasis seems to be emerging. This change in emphasis is in harmony with the trends in adult education and in modern social organization.

The signal for this new emphasis is the absence of many members of the married groups from the Sunday morning preaching service. After their class these otherwise loyal-to-the-church young and even older couples are often seen dodging out of the church side door, hoping to avoid the minister's critical eye. In some instances it has even been proposed to remedy the situation by giving up the group entirely.

But consciously or unconsciously a few churches, observant of the great satisfactions derived from the fellowship aspects of group activities, are changing the church center of gravity. This is seen in the gradual elimination of the Sunday evening preaching service, in the shorter sermon, in the Unified Service (cf. pp. 85, 86) and in the fact that sixty-eight church pastors are reported as teachers of the married groups. (cf. p. 63.)

### 2. FELLOWSHIP GROUPS—THE HEART OF THE CHURCH

The old appeal, "Come to church to hear me pray and preach," is fast losing its former potency. This is inevitable.

Much of the information that preaching and the church service supplied fifty or a hundred years ago comes to each home in newspapers and magazines, over the telephone and radio, or is found at the movies, the schools and the social clubs. Rarely does the minister face intellectually starved twelve-hour-a-day working farmers, mechanics and housekeepers.

But the hunger for comradeship is as deep and gnawing as ever. The need for new friends may be even greater in the modern mobile cities than in the more stable, but more primitive, communities of a few decades past. Hence a new church appeal is emerging. Faces brighten at the invitation, "Come to the fellowship group in my church. We are looking for new friends like you."

Of his group one member said that it had become a funnel through which many young couples on the fringe, who otherwise would be unchurched, had been drawn into that church. Others have reported that their groups are made up of friends who would stand by each other in every time of need. Members of the fellowships help each other to find jobs; they lend their cars, counsel prospective parents, help in moving, and are at hand in times of sorrow. Mutual aid and cooperation are not theories with them.

The groups we have been studying are not temporary associations based on some fleeting, academic interest. They are permanent, ongoing groups, founded on the more enduring and more primitive bond of congenial comradeship. Where these associations of intimate friends have an educational program built on the interests and needs of members, they offer, what is impossible in a mass church gathering, an opportunity for the discussion of pressing, unsolved problems. From the home, from business, at the clubs, at the office, over the radio and from the press are pouring into every thoughtful mind a babel of problems,

opinions and urges. The church can help adults to resolve these conflicts and tensions in congenial fellowships, under dynamic spiritual guidance. Such a program is invigorating to the individual and to the church and should be creative of a better community.

Through such groups the church may make an unexpected contribution to the permanence of democracy. "Group assemblies," writes an adult education leader, "are becoming more and more the means by which Americans get things done together. Democracy will stand if all the people learn to meet each other's fundamental needs by group planning; democracy will fall if groups cannot plan together, but allow themselves to be victimized by demagoguery in their leadership."<sup>1</sup> Kilpatrick has suggested that the future of American democracy may depend upon the expansion of adult education in which there is much group thinking.<sup>2</sup> Another writer reports that progressive educators and social workers are increasingly interested in clubs where, through corporate effort and sharing of purposes, members learn to subordinate individual desires and cooperate for the good of the group.<sup>3</sup> At this time, when the foundations of democracy are shaking, the church, through its fellowship groups, may help to conserve this great American experiment.

Valuable as the groups are, they have their dangerous tendencies. A class or club may become so interesting that the members neglect the larger body to which they belong. It thus may become a divisive influence in the church. Or the group may become so self-centered that adequate responsibility for service in the church or the community may be

1. Charters, Jessie A., *Young Adults and the Church*. New York, The Abingdon Press, 1936, p. 91. Quoted by permission.
2. Kilpatrick, William H., in "Foreword" to Kotinsky, Ruth, *Adult Education and the Social Scene*. New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1933, p. IX.
3. Swift, Arthur L. Jr., "What Is Group Work?" *Better Times, The Welfare Magazine*, Vol. 17, No 35, June 1, 1936, p. 9.

neglected. An evidence of this tendency to self-complacency is found in the list of 222 groups in Appendix E. No less than fifty-three Older groups are reported in churches where there is no Young group. Some of these older groups were formed ten, twelve, and even fourteen years ago. The marriage duration and age range of members of these older groups indicate that few, if any, young couples are joining. Finding more than fifty such older groups apparently neglectful of the needs of young couples in the church community leads to the conclusion that, however desirable fellowship may be as a basis of group organization, it may become an end in itself and a possible retreat from the realities of human need.

This impression that a group may become a sort of "enclosed garden" is confirmed by a study of the 452 committees reported in Table 5 (p. 43). There are only thirty-nine Social Service, Missionary, Benevolence, Stewardship, and Church Relations committees. The function of all the other 413 committees is to keep the group going, secure new members and minister to their interests and needs. There is not an indication of any general purposeful outreach beyond the boundaries of the group and of the church. Again, the group may become so exclusive that outsiders or new members find it almost impossible to break in. The members have so many mutual interests that when they meet they have much to talk about. The newcomers, therefore, do not speak the group language. The better the group is integrated the colder the strangers may find it and the more the church may fear it.

These difficulties, however, may be foreseen and largely eradicated by having, as a few groups do, a "church relations committee," a "social service committee," and a "greeters committee" which function whenever there are symptoms of the problems mentioned above. Furthermore,



the fact that 28.6 percent of the group members are serving in some official church position (cf. p. 89) is an evidence that the groups not only use the church as a meeting place, but that many of the members are sharing generously in the support and work of the church.

The fellowship groups, as one progressive teacher suggested to the writer, notwithstanding their limitations, may provide the best foundation for the whole church program. On the basis of the needs of the group members, many church activities can be planned. This is in harmony with the tendency in adult education to build courses of study and forum topics on the expressed desires of the participants. In the lower grades of the public schools progressive teachers for many years have based their teaching on the interests and needs of their pupils. Heads of boys' groups eagerly listen for program leads when they hear expressions like, "Gee, I wish," "Why can't we—?" or "Let's—." Church young people and adults quickly respond to leadership which is watchful of their deeper wants. A simple form of representation from each church group in a council which plans the Sunday service and other church activities might easily crystalize the desires of group members. Preaching and prayer meetings prepared to meet such expressed needs should not be confronted by empty pews.

An illustration of how the groups may become the heart of the church was seen in the Santa Ana Methodist Church, where young married people's groups have been functioning since 1908. An eight session spring "Church Night Program" has been conducted for several years. The fellowship groups sponsor the dinners and are active participants in the six interest groups. The Young Married People's organization in another church sponsored six lectures on Marriage, Family, Child Behavior and the Psychology of Men and Women.

Where the ongoing fellowship groups are made the heart of the church, the young married people's group may occupy a pivotal place in the church life. Toward it focus the young people's activities and from it emerge the older groups.

### 3. PLANNING AND SUSTAINING THE YOUNG MARRIED PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

In this major task of the church four steps are seen:

(1) *Educating young people for marriage is the first step.*

Each church will do everything possible to help young people build up a healthy attitude toward marriage, sane ideas on the choice of a mate, and forethought concerning their own future home.

In several cities, churches, the YMCA and the YWCA have cooperated with schools and other community organizations in holding each year one or more institutes on family relations. In the programs have been lectures and discussions on topics such as:

"Should Young People Make Their Own Choice?"

"What Makes Marriage Worthwhile?"

"Growing Up Emotionally"

"Making Personality Attractive to the Opposite Sex"

"Choice of a Mate"

"Pitfalls of Married Life"

"Current Problems of Youth"

"Financial Aspects of Marriage"

"New Homes"

Each church will see to it that in its own program young people have abundant opportunity for such marriage preparatory discussions. The public schools are already experimenting with a thorough program of sex education.<sup>1</sup>

1. Babcock, Russell B., "A Seventh Grade Course in Sex Education," *Progressive Education*, Vol. 13, No. 5, May, 1936, pp. 374-382.

Books and pamphlets, such as Elliott and Bone: *The Sex Life of Youth*; Erdman Harris: *Twenty-One*; L. Foster Wood: *Six Tests of Marriage*; and Roy A. Burkhardt: *Thinking About Marriage*, will be available to church young people.<sup>1</sup> Provisions for personal counsel with some wise person will be made possible at all times.

When a wedding is approaching, many ministers arrange one or more interviews with the prospective bride and groom. This is now compulsory in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Canon 43, "Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony," reads in part:

No Minister of this Church shall solemnize any marriage before the following conditions have been carefully complied with: He shall instruct the contracting parties as to the nature of Holy Matrimony, its responsibilities, and the means of grace which God has provided through his church.

Ministers of other denominations are increasingly declining to perform wedding ceremonies unless they have had opportunity to assure themselves that the bride and groom are taking the step intelligently. The Federal Council of Churches, through the Committee on Marriage and the Home, has recently prepared a guiding manual for pastors. Suggestions for pre-marital counseling and for the use of literature are given in a booklet of forty pages.<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that "possibly twenty percent of the Protestant ministry today are doing more or less effective work in guidance for marriage and family life."<sup>3</sup>

(2) *Maintenance of the Young Married People's group is the second step.*

1. Send ten cents to the Federal Council of Churches, 105 East 22nd St., New York City, for the *Bibliography on Education in Family Life, Marriage, Parenthood, and Young People's Relationships*.
2. *Safeguarding Marriages*. Federal Council of Churches, 105 East 22nd St., New York City, 1935, 20 cents.
3. Butterfield, Oliver, "Family and Marriage Counselling by Protestant Pastors." *Parent Education*, Vol. 3, Nos. 1 and 2, April 1 and May 15, 1936, p. 32.

Such a group, attractive to newlyweds, will always, therefore, be a prime concern of a fellowship group centered church. This class may be a section of the young people's department, or of the young adult department, or an independent group.

Whenever three or more of the youngest couples feel the need of a younger or a different group, the church will co-operate in starting it. Within the field of this study, wherever a minister or a Sunday School superintendent has made a study of this swarming-off problem, and has conferred open-mindedly with the recently married young people, a solution has been found. It seems to be difficult only when neglected.

When a group is starting, however, the members must be congenial. The importance of this factor of like-mindedness cannot be overlooked by group leaders. "In order to preserve group consciousness and vitality there must be sufficient homogeneity based on similarity of social background and hence congeniality of tastes to enable the members to feel that they are 'birds of a feather'."<sup>1</sup> Members of groups, however, have repeatedly assured the writer that similarity in financial and economic status is not a necessary condition of group solidarity. But too great a spread in intellectual and cultural standards seems undesirable. In most churches this is not a problem. The church or community framework has attracted people of similar cultural patterns. In a cosmopolitan church, however, the problem may arise. In one large city church, in order to establish groups of differing intellectual interests, the minister plans every three or four years to form a new young married couple's class. By a quiet tactfulness he hopes to start each group with differing cultural types. In another large church,

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1. Busch, Henry M., *Leadership in Group Work*. New York, Association Press, 1934, p. 196.

after several years of existence, a class divided, apparently to accommodate a keen-minded section which was dissatisfied with the unprogressive Bible teaching with which some members were quite content.

(3) *Creating an adequate group program is the third step.*

Those responsible for the program will seek "the development of a high type of religious, cultural and social fellowship," as one constitution suggests.<sup>1</sup> The program will be related to vital needs, and will make much use of discussion, as adult education is increasingly doing. In some form of church or community service an adequate outlet for the spirit of adventure will also be sought. Many members of the groups are descendants of the nation's pioneers. In their veins flows the blood of the conquerors of the frontier. While few untrod geographical areas remain, in the realm of human nature and human relations challenging explorations await the courageous. Guided by the principles of a dynamic religion these young married people should be eager to be led, as Judd suggests, "to undertake that higher adventure of mastering through trained intelligence the general problems of human life."<sup>2</sup>

The fascination of working with young married people is their extraordinary virility. They are in the creative prime of life. Awaken their vision and interest and they are off. One young woman became social chairman of her group. For the first time in her life she got the taste of leadership. Thirty-five library books were read. A packed notebook and an armful of materials were gathered. She finally wrote a small manual of party plans, and went about demonstrating social leadership.

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1. Two-by-Two Fellowship, Atascadero Community Church.

2. Judd, Charles H., *Education and Social Progress*. New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1934, p. 276.

Another, a young woman doctor, invited the young fathers and mothers of her group to study together her problem of giving sex information to her own young child. From her study for this gathering in her home she developed into a teacher and writer on this subject.

The normal result of maintaining a young married people's group is the beginning of the next step.

(4) *Grading the Adult Department of the church is the fourth step.*

This happens in two ways. Older people, in at least three churches observed, asked for their own class, similar to the young married people's group. Or, four to ten years after organizing, the Young group becomes Older. It moves up in the adult department and another Young group arises. There are thirty-one such cases listed in Appendix E. Three of these churches have five such fellowship married groups in a progressive age-range order. Furthermore, the older groups seem to find in their friendships as great satisfactions as the younger people.

While observance of these groups leads to the conclusion that the grading has been based largely on the differing social and friendship interests, as age advances there are other changes of interests which need more attention in religious education.<sup>1</sup> The aspects of marriage, parenthood, vocation, recreation, church and community service all must change vitally after ten, twenty or thirty years of married life. Problems of widowhood, of home life where there are adolescent children or where the children have left the home, of increasing leisure for hobbies, study, recreation and service, all come welling up in advancing adulthood. This study suggests, therefore, that there may be as real a need of specialized graded religious education for

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1. Strong, Edward Kellogg, *Change of Interests With Age*. Stanford University, California, Stanford University Press, 1931.

the older adults as for those who have just undertaken the thrilling adventure of married life. A recent writer has pointed out that some goals can be reached only in maturity. An education adequate for the whole of life will gradually lead away from projects appealing to self-centered interests to participation in affairs of social and racial outreach.<sup>1</sup>

In a church which plans fellowship groups for married people, the unmarried young adults need not be ignored. In small churches they join with the married group. In the better organized churches, however, there are live, jolly groups of these older young people. The Pals Club in one church<sup>2</sup> has a membership of over 100. From this group eighteen weddings took place in one year. This reputation for success in mating attracts new members from a wide area. The Second Milers in another church,<sup>3</sup> with the Young Married People's Class, forms the Junior Adult Department.

Young men and women, not yet engaged, have been seen shopping around among the churches for a suitable group. Every church should feel its responsibility for providing a fellowship in which young men and women of marriageable age can meet under the refining influences of wise leadership. In this way, that loneliness of bachelorhood among both men and women, which the business women's and the young men's classes tend to promote, may be prevented.

For successful mating, such a group, said one experienced director of religious education, should number at least 100. If this is true, small groups should deliberately plan inter-visitation with other similar associations of unmarried young people.

An analysis of the 222 group reports leads to the fol-

1. Elliott, Grace Loucks, *Women After Forty*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1936, pp. 13, 185.
2. First Congregational Church, Los Angeles.
3. First Methodist Church, Alhambra.

lowing suggestions as one possible basis for grading an adult department. In a complete grading or grouping scheme, however, other bases for congenial fellowship groups with common interests would be taken into account.

- a. *Unmarried Young Adults*, composed of those who are beyond "young people" age.
- b. *Young Married People*, from marriage to the age of 35-40, or from marriage until the older couples have been married from five to nine years. Parents of pre-school children are usually found in this group.
- c. *Second Older Married Group*. This automatically emerges as the younger group comes to the age limits mentioned above. Or it may be newly formed. In Appendix E, the average age range in eighty-eight such groups is 27-45.3, and the average length of marriage is 11.6 years. Parents of children of school age to adolescence are found in such groups.
- d, e, f. *Third, Fourth, and Fifth Older Married Groups* are found in a few instances. These have evolved as a newly formed young group has advanced each older group one stage higher. In these groups are found parents of adolescent children, parents of married children, parents whose children have left the home, widows and widowers. The problems of these older people have yet to be studied. With their increasing leisure they may be a richer field for adult education and for recruiting for church and community service than even the younger groups.



## Chapter IX

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This inquiry has been an attempt to discover the procedure by which churches may meet their responsibilities for young married people. By the use of a questionnaire and through personal observation, a study has been made of the history and present conditions of 222 married groups in the churches of Southern California. These groups have arisen without promotion by national religious education leaders. In two instances they date back as far as 1908. A type of church activity, therefore, with such a natural origin and with a continuous history of twenty-eight years, should be of great significance to adult religious education.

From a study of the origins, purposes, programs, educational procedures and church relations of these groups, seven conclusions emerge:

1. Young married people form a ripe and unharvested section of the American church field. The few churches which, over a period of years, have made an effort to meet the interests and needs of the young couples growing up in their constituencies find these young people appreciative and responsive. The young married groups readily fit into the church organization, and many group members, as they mature, become active leaders in the church. Five churches reported respectively 205, 362, 374, 576 and 654 members of present married groups, nearly all of which originally started as young couples' organizations. Of 13,368 members belonging to the 222 groups 3,824 are serving their churches as Sunday School teachers, church officers and in other positions of leadership.

2. Young married people feel a sense of separateness both from unmarried young people of their own age and

from older married couples. Their interests and problems are different and more acute. In their marriage adjustments, home building, preparation for children, making a living and forming new social alignments, young people in early married life probably face more critical situations than at any other period. Sensing the similarity in their life problems, young married people find satisfaction in membership in a group of similar age, similar length of marriage and similar cultural and intellectual backgrounds.

3. Strong emphasis is given in all the groups to the fellowship or friendship aspects of their programs. The friendships formed are so binding that each group has continued as an integrated fellowship. In no case is there a system of graduation from a younger to an older group. As a young group matures it moves up in the adult section of the church and a new younger group is formed. In three churches five such age-graded groups were found.

The cohesive force of this primitive bond of fellowship, the satisfaction of belonging to an association of sympathetic friends, is the most significant finding of this study. It suggests that the emphasis in adult religious education upon non-permanent or periodic interest groupings should be changed to the promotion of more permanent fellowship groups, with an occasional temporary re-grouping for specialized studies.

4. Other than the satisfaction of friendship needs there is little uniformity of objective in the present programs of the groups. Most of the groups seek in a vague way to help their members solve the practical problems of daily life by a study of the Bible. But the most pressing problems of young couples—marriage, home, parenthood and vocational adjustment to social change—are receiving little attention in most of the groups. A new philosophy of group objectives is, therefore, needed.

It is suggested that the purpose of a group should be to guide the members in finding satisfaction of their fundamental wants in the social setting in which the members live. Some of these basic needs are security in obtaining food, clothing and shelter and in avoiding pain; friendship and sympathy; activity and rest; recognition and praise; thrills and adventure; sex expression; opportunity to serve; freedom, and a sense of at-one-ness with the universe. To meet members' needs, which are inadequately met by other community organizations, in the order of their importance and of their felt intensity, and with due regard to necessary changes in the general social structure and to the satisfaction of the needs of other people, should be the objective of a fellowship group.

5. A few groups have pointed the way to the curriculum changes which must be made if group programs are to meet the basic needs of members. While 71 percent of the groups in their formal educational periods use uniform lessons prepared for a specific date months or years in advance, a few pioneering groups have ventured deeply into the fields of marriage adjustments, the home, parenthood and social change. The search by other group leaders for resource materials is evidence that if suitable courses of study were available many groups would take up more life-centered studies.

6. There is abundant evidence that the church is specially fitted for an aggressive program of group activity for young married people. Great numbers of young couples have grown up as children in the church. They were married by the church minister. Other family ministrations such as baptisms and funerals are conducted by the church. To the church great numbers of people still look for spiritual guidance and inspiration, especially in various forms of corporate worship. In many cases churches have demonstrated

that they can mobilize church and community educators for leadership of their married groups. It is time for the church to recognize its potentialities in this neglected area and gird itself for a new venture comparable in importance to the creation of the Sunday School a century and a half ago.

7. Churches which are meeting the challenge of young adulthood are shifting their center of emphasis from the "preaching service" to the fellowship groups. This appears in the shorter sermon, the abandonment of evening preaching, in the Unified Service (cf. pp. 85, 86), and in the part fellowship groups are taking in the activities of the church.

Fellowship groups are thus becoming the heart of the church, and the young married group occupies an important place in these fellowships. Toward this group, through training for marriage and home life, the younger sections of the church focus; from this group, as the members mature, other adult groups spring. As such a series of adult fellowships develops, a grading of the adult department of the church automatically follows. From fellowship groups, integrated in a comprehensive church program, the church of the future may be built. This conclusion is based on the conviction that while many other aspects of human relations are in process of change, the need for congenial fellowships, in which vital problems may be mutually met, grows ever greater with the increasing complexity of modern life.

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# APPENDIX

## A. DATA SHEET USED

### A STUDY OF THE YOUNG MARRIED PEOPLE'S GROUPS IN THE CHURCHES OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The purpose of this inquiry is to find out what the churches of Southern California have recently done or are doing for young married people. By assembling these reports it is anticipated that discoveries will be made which will help many churches to meet more efficiently the vital interests and needs of young married folk. The experiences of your group, if carefully recorded on this sheet, may contribute essential elements to the total picture. The cooperation of every group is, therefore, necessary for the greatest value to all. The answers to some of the questions, especially on historical points, may require counsel with other members besides yourself. Why not arrange an evening's conference with one or two of the older members?

An extra copy of this questionnaire is provided for you to fill out and retain in your group files. By so doing, valuable hints for the future program of your own group may emerge.

When finished this data sheet should be mailed or handed to George Gleason, 327 South Ardmore Avenue, Los Angeles. It is hoped that it will be prepared in one week, or at most, two weeks.

(After this study is completed, a summary of the findings will be sent to each person who has filled out the sheet.)

#### I. THE CHURCH

1. Name of church .....
2. Address .....
3. Denomination.....
4. Population of the city or town.....
5. Number of members in the church .....
6. Average Sunday morning attendance at church.....
7. Name of the minister.....

#### II. STRUCTURE OF THE GROUP

1. Name .....
2. Date of organization .....
3. Officers (Check with an X the officers which your group has):  
(a) President.....(b) Vice-President.....(c) Secretary.....  
(d) Treasurer.....(e) .....
4. How many of the above officers are men?..... Women?.....
5. How many presidents has the group had?.....
6. How many of these presidents have been men?.....
7. Membership. (In answering the following questions, where accurate figures are not available, give the best estimate you can.)  
(a) The members at the present time range in age from.....to.....  
(b) In the membership are.....men and.....women. Total.....  
(c) Of the above.....have never been married.  
(d) All the members of the group except.....are members of the church.
8. Relation of this group to other departments of the church.  
(a) A section of the Adult Department?.....  
(b) If not, is it an independent section of the church school?.....  
(c) Is it a separate club?.....

- (d) If not, how is it related to the church?.....  
 (e) How many different members of the group are serving now in other parts of the church work?.....  
 (1) How many teach in Sunday School?.....  
 (2) How many sing in the choir?.....  
 (3) What do others do?.....
9. What committees does the group have?.....
10. Give samples of available printed or mimeographed material descriptive of any aspect of the program of the group.

### III. PROGRAM OF THE GROUP

1. List the PRESENT program items in the order in which they developed—Social gathering, Sunday class, forum, parent's class, ladies' meeting, men's group, etc.

Name of program item	Date when started	Day and hour of meeting	Average attendance now	% men	% women
(a) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(b) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(c) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(d) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
(e) .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

2. Who have been the teachers or discussion leaders of the group?

Name	Vocation	Other teaching experience	No. years with this class
(a) .....	.....	.....	.....
(b) .....	.....	.....	.....
(c) .....	.....	.....	.....
(d) .....	.....	.....	.....

The present teacher is: Name .....

Address .....

Which of the above have been paid?.....

3. Give a complete program outline or order of service of the regular meeting.....
4. What courses of study or teaching guides have been used?.....
5. Mark 1, 2, 3, etc., in order of weight the motives leading to the forming of the group:
- .....To meet the need for social life and recreation
- .....To meet the need for education on marriage relations and parenthood.
- .....To teach the Bible.
- .....To help settle theological problems.
- .....To discuss practical problems of daily life.
- .....To discuss problems relating to economics and the social order.
- .....To add new members to the church.

### IV. EDUCATIONAL PROCEDURE OF THE GROUP

1. Check in one column on the right the use made of each of the following procedures for discovering what the members desire or need:

	Great	Moderate	Slight
(a) Questionnaires .....	.....	.....	.....
(b) Special Conferences .....	.....	.....	.....
(c) Discussion by Group .....	.....	.....	.....
(d) Decision of Leader .....	.....	.....	.....
(e) Decision of Group Officers .....	.....	.....	.....
(f) .....	.....	.....	.....

2. Check in ONE column on the right the emphasis given in the group program to each of the following items:

	Great	Moderate	Slight
(a) Worship .....			
(b) Study of the Bible .....			
(c) Social fellowship .....			
(d) Problems of marriage adjustments .....			
(e) Financial aspects of home management .....			
(f) Parent-child relationships .....			
(g) Problems of recreation .....			
(h) Health problems .....			
(i) Vocational problems .....			
(j) Home crafts .....			
(k) Aesthetic interests .....			
(l) A philosophy of life .....			
(m) Consumer education .....			
(n) Problems of the economic and social order .....			
(o) Civic responsibilities .....			
(p) Race and international relations .....			
(q) .....			
(r) .....			
(s) .....			

3. Check in one column on the right the relative use made of each of the following educational methods:

	Great	Moderate	Slight
(a) Address by a special speaker .....			
(b) Forum led by a special speaker .....			
(c) Address by the regular leader .....			
(d) Discussion led by the regular leader .....			
(e) Reports on reading .....			
(f) Use of International Uniform Sunday School Lessons .....			
(g) Following another outline or text-book .....			

4. Check in one column on the right the relative need felt by your group for further guidance and counsel on the following items:

	Great	Moderate	Slight
(a) How to secure new members .....			
(b) Programs for socials or parties .....			
(c) How to secure a leader or teacher .....			
(d) How to train the new officers and committees .....			
(e) How to select topics for study .....			
(f) How to teach parent-child relationship .....			
(g) Education regarding marriage relations .....			
(h) Worship programs .....			
(i) How to find other needed resource materials .....			
(j) How to discover the needs and interests of the group .....			
(k) How to help each individual member grow toward his highest and richest possibilities .....			
(l) .....			

## V. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

(If the accurate facts are not available, please give estimate, marking est)

- The average length of marriage of the married members of the group is.....yrs.
- The number of families in the group without children is.....
- The number of families in the group with one child is.....
- With two children.....
- With three or more children.....
- The number of families in the group with a child ten or more years old is.....
- What percentage of the married people in the church of the age area of the group are members of this group?.....
- Approximately what percentage of attendants at the regular group meeting attend the Sunday church service?.....

Report prepared by .....

Date..... Address.....

## B. REPLY POSTCARD USED

## THE YOUNG MARRIED PEOPLE'S GROUP

Name of Church .....  
 Name of Group .....  
 Date of organization of group .....  
 The members range in age from.....to.....years  
 In the membership are.....men, .....women, Total.....  
 The couples have been married on the average.....years  
 The average attendance at the Sunday School class is.....  
 The average attendance at socials is.....  
 The vocation of the teacher is .....  
 How many members of the group serve on church committees or teach in Sunday  
 School? .....  
 Does the group study the International Uniform Sunday School Lessons?.....  
 If not, what lesson? .....  
 Signed.....

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- (2) Church group activities for unmarried young adults.
- (3) How to discover the interests and needs of young married people.
- (4) The social and recreational programs of young married people's groups.
- (5) Hobbies of young married people.
- (6) What types of leaders are best fitted to meet the needs of young married people?
- (7) In what areas are resource materials, or study units, needed by young married people's groups Which of these are available?
- (8) In what manner do the interests and needs of married people change with advancing age?
- (9) The influence of young married people's groups upon the age of the church membership.
- (10) What is a desirable number of members for an adult church group?
- (11) What is the trend in church schools in regard to mixed and sex-separated adult classes?

## E. DETAILED LIST OF 222 GROUPS

NAME OF CHURCH	NAME OF GROUP	Date of Or- ganization	Av. number yrs. married	Age Range	No. Members	No. Members not married	Av. attend. at group meeting <sup>5</sup>	Type of Group
<b>BAPTIST CHURCHES</b>								
First, Alhambra	Ambassador Class	1928	18	25-50	76	0	38	2nd Older MP
First, Alhambra	Bible Study Class	1933	9	22-40	50	2	30	YMP Class
First, Alhambra	Neogamus Class	1926	12	30-45	120	0	50	2nd Older MP
First, Glendale	El-Te-Kon Class <sup>1</sup>	1933	5	23-40	70	0	25	YMP Class
First, Glendale	Bethel S.S. Class	1927	12	20-40	54	0	27	2nd Older MP
First, Maywood	Friendship Class	1933	7	20-31	33	0	20	YMP Class
First, Maywood	Ambassador Class	1913	23	45-55	160	0	50	3rd Older MP
First, Pasadena	Comrade Class	1927	15	23-45	150	0	74	2nd Older MP
First, Pasadena	Bereans	1924	18	40-50	80	0	30	YMP Class
First, Van Nuys	"Win One"	1928	9	20-40	80	0	50	4th Older MP
First, Van Nuys	Four Square Class	1914	30	45-60	60	0	30	3rd Older MP
First, Whittier	Bricks Class	1922	16	35-45	32	0	18	2nd Older MP
First, Whittier	Forward Class	1931	12	30-45	26	10	10	YMP Class
First, Whittier	YMP Class	1935	2	20-30	19	0	6	YMP Class
First, Corona	YMP Class	1932	8	20-38	42	0	15	YMP Class
First, Downey	Three L Class <sup>2</sup>	1932	5	20-40	30	2	19	YMP Class
First, Garden Grove	Friendship Class	1933	5	25-40	15	0	10	YMP Class
First, Huntington Beach	Threptonian <sup>3</sup>	1933	8	22-35	25	0	15	YMP Class
Fairview Heights, Inglewood	Christian Companion- ship Club	1935	7	25-35	32	0	30	Sunday evening YMP Group
Bethany, Long Beach	Young People's Class	1930	5	20-35	120	28	50	Young Adult
First, Long Beach	Dr. Jensen's Bible Class	1930	7	25-35	210	23	105	YMP Class
First, Los Angeles	Thirty-five Club	1932	7	22-35	60	0	50	YMP Social Club
Highland Park, Los Angeles	El Dad (God Loves) Class	1932	10	30-45	50	0	85	2nd Older MP
Roger Williams, Los Angeles	ARTHO Society <sup>4</sup>	1930	9	23-40	67	9	33	YMP Class
South Park, Los Angeles	Maranatha Class	1933	6	22-35	40	0	27	YMP Class

1 Whose Builder and Maker is God

2 Learn, Love, Lift

3 Reapers

4 Always Ready to Help Others

5 Sunday Class attendance is given, except in the case of Social Clubs, for which the report is of the monthly social.



## BAPTIST CHURCHES (Contd.)

Temple, Los Angeles	1928	7	25-35	40	0	32	YMP Class
First, Montebello	1934	4.5	22-36	17	1	12	YMP Class
First, North Hollywood	1938	11	25-40	46	1	25	2nd Older MP
First, Ontario	1932	8	19-35	44	0		YMP Class
Calvary, Pasadena	1933	7	28-38	50	11	38	Young Adult
First, Pomona	1931	8	20-40	40	0	21	YMP Class
First, Redlands	1927	12	80-45	60	0	20	2nd Older MP
Calvary, San Bernardino	1928	7	24-35	34	6	15	YMP Class
First, San Pedro	1926	2.5	19-30	33	0	18	YMP Class
First, Santa Ana	1938	12	30-50	98	0	86	2nd Older MP
Trinity, Santa Monica	1927	10	20-40	27	2	15	2nd Older MP
West Los Angeles	1929	8	23-36	69	0	14	YMP Class

## CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

First, Los Angeles	1930		35-55	132	12	60	2nd Older MP
First, Los Angeles	1931	5	23-33	76	1	30	YMP Class
Central, Pasadena	1927	12	30-40	47	0	20	2nd Older MP
Central, Pasadena	1930	6	24-33	40	0		YMP Class
First, Riverside	1927	11	30-45	40	3	25	2nd Older MP
First, Riverside	1929	5	22-35	24	3	16	YMP Class
First, Santa Ana	1920	15	28-49	65	0	31	2nd Older MP
First, Santa Ana	1930	8	20-35	79	0	27	YMP Class
Central, Van Nuys	1925	20	35-45	60	2	38	2nd Older MP
Central, Van Nuys	1933	6	23-35	35	2	20	YMP Class
First, Alhambra	1925	15	20-45	248	2	95	2nd Older MP
Randolph St., Ball	1934	6	20-32	46	0	88	YMP Class
Christian, Brea	1922	5	26-65	57	5	25	2nd Older MP
Christian, Burbank	1931	5	25-35	30	0	18	YMP Class
First, Fullerton	1928	6	25-40	60	0	35	YMP Class
Central, Glendale	1926	6	22-40	120	0	40	YMP Class
East Side, Long Beach	1933	3	20-30	19	10	10	YMP Class
First, Long Beach	1931	3	21-40	68		40	YMP Class
Arlington Ave., Los Angeles	1931	10	30-40	35	6	26	2nd Older MP
Community, Los Angeles	1926	8	25-40	80	1	20	YMP Class
Cypress Park, Los Angeles	1930	8	25-40	80	0	18	YMP Class
Highland Park, Los Angeles	1932	6	20-35	32	1	18	YMP Class
Hollywood-Beverly, Los Angeles	1933	10	25-50	81	0	65	2nd Older MP
Huntington Park, Los Angeles	1929	10	27-37	119	0	50	2nd Older MP

1 "All For Christ"—A F C are also the pastor's initials

2 Young Married Folks

3 Friendly Indians

4 2 Timothy 2:16

## E. DETAILED LIST OF 222 GROUPS (Contd.)

NAME OF CHURCH	NAME OF GROUP	Date of Organization	Av. number yrs. married	Age Range	No. Members	No. Members not married	Av. attend. at group meeting	Type of Group
CHRISTIAN CHURCHES (Contd.)								
McCarthy Memorial, Los Angeles	Berean Class	1921	12	35-45	70	2	35	2nd Older MP
Pico Heights, Los Angeles	Home Builders	1931	12	20-40	80	2	40	2nd Older MP
Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles	Home Builders	1930	11	25-40	116	1	50	2nd Older MP
Christian, Lynwood	Le-Wo-Te Class <sup>1</sup>	1932	11	24-40	28	0	13	2nd Older MP
First, Ocean Park	Live Wire Class	1925	15	30-50	40	1	18	2nd Older MP
State Street, Redlands	Willing Workers Class	1929	4	20-30	82	8	15	Young Adult
First, Redondo Beach	Los Amigos Class	1935	5	19-35	17	8	9	YMP Class
Arlington, Riverside	United Scholars	1934	4	19-26	17	4	8	YMP Class
University, San Diego	Tuxis Class <sup>2</sup>	1924	10	23-48	71	0	25	2nd Older MP
First, Santa Monica	Friendship Class	1926	7	25-50	70	0	42	2nd Older MP
Christian, Ventura	4 L Class <sup>3</sup>	1930	15	25-45	40	0	20	2nd Older MP
West Los Angeles	Young Married Couples	1934	15	19-30	50	0	20	YMP Class
First, Whittier	99 Class	1924	15	25-50	85	2	45	2nd Older MP
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES								
Community, Atascadero	Two-by-Two Fellowship	1934	11	22-45	40	0	20	2nd Older MP
First, Corona	Fellowship of the Open Mind	1934	10	25-45	80	0	17	2nd Older MP
United, Eagle Rock	Good Fellowship Class	1923	10	25-45	55	1	24	Social Club
First, Glendale	John and Priscilla Club	1930	10	28-44	58	0	30	2nd Older MP
First, Los Angeles	Round Table Class	1933	5	25-40	30	1	21	Social Club
Garvanza, Los Angeles	The Couples' Club	1935	4	20-35	80	0	20	YMP Social Club
Mt. Hollywood, Los Angeles	Homemakers	1933	9	25-46	46	0	18	2nd Older MP
Western Knoll, Los Angeles	Western Knoll Community Club	1928	10	29-45	42	0	30	2nd Older MP
Bethel, Ontario	Merrie Married Club	1934	5	23-33	18	0	14	Social Club
First, Pasadena	Olmstead Class	1922	12	32-42	40	2	20	YMP Social Club

1 Learn-Work-Teach

2 U and I in Training for Service for Christ (X)

3 Look out, Look up, Look ahead, Lift

## CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES (Contd.)

	1929	7	25-35	37	4	22	YMP Class
Lake Avenue, Pasadena .....	U. S. Class <sup>1</sup>						Young Adult
First, Redondo Beach .....	Young People's Class	7	18-30	14	4	6	YMP Social Club
First, Riverside .....	Plymouth Fellowship	1933	20-40	32	0	24	YMP Social Club
First, Saticoy .....	Two-by-Two Club	1934	25-38	30	0	20	2nd Older MP
Sierra Madre .....	Bible Forum	1930	30-45	28	5	10	2nd Older MP
Oneonta, South Pasadena .....	Two-by-Two Club	1925	25-45	150	0	60	Social Club

  

	1924	10+	35-50	190	0	75	3rd Older MP
First, Alhambra .....	Fidelis Class						3rd Older MP
First, Alhambra .....	Home Builders	1930	23-40	80	0	35	2nd Older MP
First, Alhambra .....	YMP Class	1934	22-30	36	0	20	YMP Class
First, Glendale .....	Married People's Class	1925	30-50	306	0	100	2nd Older MP
First, Glendale .....	20-30 Friendship Club	1931	20-39	100	15	25	YMP Class
First, Hollywood .....	Truth Seekers	1910	50-65	40	0	30	4th Older MP
First, Hollywood .....	Builders Class	1918	40-50	85	0	39	3rd Older MP
First, Hollywood .....	Wilmar Class	1926	28-40	150	0	80	2nd Older MP
First, Hollywood .....	YMP Class	1935	21-27	27	0	12	YMP Class
First, Huntington Park .....	Co-Workers S.S. Class	1921	30-65	100	0	45	5th Older MP
First, Huntington Park .....	Sanper Fidelis <sup>2</sup>	1927	35-55	125	0	50	4th Older MP
First, Huntington Park .....	Benedict	1924	30-42	257	0	150	3rd Older MP
First, Huntington Park .....	TWC Class <sup>3</sup>	1929	20-38	140	0	45	2nd Older MP
First, Huntington Park .....	Alpha Class	1935	18-30	32	0	14	YMP Class
Grace, Long Beach .....	Home Builders	1920	31-42	69	28		2nd Older MP
Grace, Long Beach .....	Jos. Malby Class	1934	22-35	30	4		YMP Class
Whilshire, Los Angeles .....	Double Circle Class	1928	30-45	80	0	50	2nd Older MP
Whilshire, Los Angeles .....	Hi Spire Class <sup>4</sup>	1933	21-35	32	0	14	YMP Class
First, Pasadena .....	Home Builders	1919	30-50	260	0	100	3rd Older MP
First, Pasadena .....	Parents' Class	1928	20-30	180	1	60	2nd Older MP
First, Pasadena .....	Parents' Class No. 2	1935	22-35	18	0	10	YMP Class
First, Pasadena .....	Fellowship Class	1920	30-50	82	0	30	2nd Older MP
Holliston Ave., Pasadena .....	LO FE LO Class <sup>5</sup>	1924	21-40	58	0	30	YMP Class
First, Holliston Ave., Pasadena .....	Two-in-One Class	1925	25-40	80	0	30	2nd Older MP
First, Redlands .....	Partners	1934	22-35	20	0	15	YMP Class
First, Redlands .....	Christian Home Makers	1915	30-50	75	0	35	2nd Older MP
First, San Bernardino .....	Two-In-One Class	1930	20-35	40	0	20	YMP Class
First, Santa Ana .....	Friendly Circle Class	1908	50-75	140	0	70	5th Older MP
First, Santa Ana .....	Two-In-One Class	1913	40-55	92	0	40	4th Older MP

### 7 "United and Single"

2 Separated from the Co-Workers in 1927

### 3 "Together With Christ"

#### 4 Meets in the Church Tower

5 Love, Fellowship, Loyalty

## E. DETAILED LIST OF 222 GROUPS (Contd.)

NAME OF CHURCH	NAME OF GROUP	Date of Or- ganization	Av. number yrs. married	Age Range	No. Members	No. Members not married	Av. attend. at Group meeting	Type of Group
METHODIST CHURCHES (Contd.)								
First, Santa Ana	Home Builders	1922	15	28-40	84	1	25	3rd Older MP
First, Santa Ana	Amistad Class <sup>1</sup>	1930	10	23-38	60	0	19	2nd Older MP
First, Santa Ana	Epsilon Tau Alpha <sup>2</sup>	1935	2	20-26	18	0	8	YMP Class
M. E. Church, Santa Maria	Friendly Circle	1921	18	30-60	45	0	27	2nd Older MP
M. E. Church, Santa Maria	Young Folks Class	1935	3	20-30	20	0	15	YMP Class
First, Santa Monica	Partners	1925	8	25-50	60	0	30	2nd Older MP
First, Santa Monica	Fifty-Fifty Class	1933	4	22-35	19	0	7	YMP Class
First, Whittier	Two-in-One Class	1914	25	40-60	300	0	80	4th Older MP
First, Whittier	J. U. (Join Us) Class	1919	14	28-43	220	0	50	3rd Older MP
First, Whittier	Upstream Class	1932	8	25-30	46	0	12	2nd Older MP
First, Whittier	Chr. Character Builders	1935	1	18-27	10	0	8	YMP Class
First, Whittier	Mariotters Class	1924	10	26-40	70	0	20	2nd Older MP
Marengo Ave., Alhambra	Tri Sigma Class <sup>3</sup>	1921	12	25-50	37	0	30	2nd Older MP
White Temple, Anaheim	Mr. Webb's Bible Class	1934	9	22-40	26	2	18	YMP Class
Community, Baldwin Park	Home Makers	1920		22-37	25	0	14	YMP Class
M. E., Chataworth	Builders Class	1929	7	25-45	60	1	30	2nd Older MP
First, Corona	Keystone Class	1926	7	25-40	46	0	25	YMP Class
First, Inglewood	YMP Class	1935	7	22-35	20	2	15	YMP Class
Atlantic Ave., Long Beach	YMP Class	1935	8	22-39	27	0	16	YMP Class
Belmont Heights, Long Beach	The Builders	1930	5	25-35	24	5	12	YMP Class
Crescent Heights, Los Angeles	The Builders	1933	5.5	18-40	30	0	15	YMP Class
Euclid Heights, Los Angeles	Tower Class	1930		28-38	113	6	55	2nd Older MP
First, Los Angeles	Keystone Class	1932	8	23-38	38	0	12	YMP Class
Florence Ave., Los Angeles	Waylayn Class	1932	8	25-40	50	6	25	YMP Class
Mt. Olive, Los Angeles	Young Mar. Couples' Class	1933	6	20-39	45	8	20	YMP Class
Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles	Comm. Friendship Club	1934	12	25-50	42	3	18	2nd Older MP
Southwest Community, Los Angeles	We Boys-Philathea Class <sup>4</sup>	1932	9	24-39	38	6	10	YMP Class
Vincent, Los Angeles	R P C Class			25-45	96		25	2nd Older MP
First, Orange	Home Builders	1931	12	25-50	95		45	2nd Older MP

1 "Friendship"

2 "Seekers of Truth"

3 Meaning not known

4 Combined from a men's and women's class

## METHODIST CHURCHES (Contd.)

Washington St., Pasadena	Christian Forum	1930	8	25-35	40	0	12	YMP Class
M. E., Paso Robles	Berean Class	1928	9	20-38	18	3	8	YMP Class
Trinity, Pomona	Friendship Class	1921	12	30-45	52	0	15	2nd Older MP
Grace, Redlands	Aim High Class	1938	10	25-40	32	0	20	2nd Older MP
First, Riverside		1935	2	20-30	24	0	12	YMP Class
Grace, Riverside		1933	7	21-40	17	0	10	YMP Class
	Y M Couples Volley							
M. E., San Fernando	Ball Club	1935	6.5	20-35	34	0		YMP Club
First, Santa Barbara	Berean Class	1915	30	45-52	40	2	15	3rd Older MP
M. E. Santa Paula	YMP Class	1931	10	25-45	34	0	12	2nd Older MP
First, South Gate	Fidells Class	1928	13	27-47	55	2	19	2nd Older MP
First, Upland	Junior Adult	1933	6	22-40	71	26	20	Young Adult
First, Van Nuys	Christian Companions	1933	4	20-32	36	4	15	YMP Class
	PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES							
Highland Park, Los Angeles	Married Peo. Class Alpha	1922	15	28-55	138	0	45	2nd Older MP
Highland Park, Los Angeles	Cleland Class	1933	4	23-35	36	12	20	Young Adult
Immanuel, Los Angeles	Married People's Class	1927	20	30-70	250	4	90	2nd Older MP
Immanuel, Los Angeles	Irvine Bible Class	1919 <sup>1</sup>		28-40	112	89	52	Young Adult
Pasadena, Pasadena	Parents' Class	1923	12	30-45	102	0	50	2nd Older MP
	Fellowship Club	1921 <sup>2</sup>	5	28-50	79	7	45	Sunday evening YMP Group
First, Pomona	Schooner Club Class	1927	12	30-42	24	0		2nd Older MP
First, Pomona	Hearthside Class	1928	7	21-32	62	0	25	YMP Class
First, Alhambra	Sunday Evening Forum	1934	5	25-35	25	3	21	YMP Class
Garvalia, Alhambra	S O S Class	1934	3	18-35	30	6	7	Young Adult
San Geronimo, Beaumont	YMP (S.S.) Class	1932	5	20-30	20	0	6	YMP Class
Presbyterian Ch., Burbank	Schooner Club	1935	7	25-35	40	0	45	YMP Social Club
First, Eagle Rock	Pargellis Class	1923	14	30-50	64	0	30	2nd Older MP
Presbyterian Ch., Fullerton	Mixed Class	1935	10	25-40	30			2nd Older MP
First, Monrovia	Fellowship Class	1934	6	26-36	31	4	14	YMP Class
Bethany, Los Angeles	Fellowship Class	1931	15	30-50	50	10	42	2nd Older MP
Cypress Park, Los Angeles	Couples Class	1933	8	24-34	12	0	10	YMP Class
St. Paul, Los Angeles	Win Another	1932	6	20-45	25	3	21	YMP Class
Wilshire, Los Angeles	Friendly Bible Class	1932		30-45	32	18	38	2nd Older MP
Wilshire Crest, Los Angeles	Schooner Club	1935	9	25-40	100	0	80	YMP Social Club
First, Orange	Team Mates	1932	5	24-36	49	0	12	YMP Class
First, Redlands	Schooner Club	1935	10	20-40	100	0	80	2nd Older MP
Calvary, Riverside	Schooner Club	1931	8	20-40	250	0	85	Social Club
First, San Bernardino	Young Married People	1927	7	25-38	58	0	22	YMP Social Club

1 As a young men's class

2 As a young people's group

## E. DETAILED LIST OF 222 GROUPS (Contd.)

NAME OF CHURCH	NAME OF GROUP	Date of Or- ganization	Av. number yrs. married	Age Range	No. Members	No. Members not married	Av. attend. at group meeting	Type of Group
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES (Contd.)								
First, Santa Barbara	YMP Class	1932	11	25-50	36	2	20	2nd Older MP
First, Santa Monica	Coupler's Club	1934	4	21-38	50	0	8	YMP Class
Calvary, South Pasadena	Builders	1924	7	25-36	25	10	10	Young Adult
Upland, Upland	The Ambassadors	1932	9	25-40	30	0	12	YMP Class
Federated, Whittier	Schooner Club	1934	5	20-35	26	2	12	YMP Class
Calvary, Wilmington		1926	3.5	25-38	22	0		YMP Social Club
DENOMINATIONS WITH FEW GROUPS								
Trinity M. E. (South) Los Angeles	Christian Home Builders	1930	11	30-45	84	1	50	2nd Older MP
Trinity M. E. (South) Los Angeles	Chi Alpha Class	1930	3	21-30	54	0	85	YMP Class
Foursquare Gospel Church, Santa Monica	Uplifters	1931	10	30-45	54	0	25	2nd Older MP
Foursquare Gospel Church, Santa Monica	YMP Class	1935	4	20-30	17	0	12	YMP Class
First Friends, Whittier	The Get Busy Bible Class	1908	40	45-55	60	5	50	5th Older MP
First Friends, Whittier	Berean Class	1910	25	45-55	50	2	20	4th Older MP
First Friends, Whittier	B T A Class	1916	17	30-55	50	0	20	3rd Older MP
First Friends, Whittier	50-50 Class	1924	8	26-38	24	0	12	2nd Older MP
First Friends, Whittier	FTF (First Things First)	1924	2	20-30	21	0	9	YMP Class
Christ's Community, Canoga Park	Home Makers' Class	1933	7	25-35	19	0	10	YMP Class
Christian and Missionary Alliance, Glendale	The Alliance Fellowship	1933	25-40	30	12	24	24	Young Adult
First United Presbyterian, Long Beach	Ayuda (friendship) Class	1924	10	25-40	41	1	25	2nd Older MP
Southwest Church of Christ, Los Angeles	YMP Class	1934	1.5	20-27	11	0	8	YMP Class
Trinity Episcopal, Los Angeles	Plus Two Club	1928	5	22-35	30	0	30	YMP Club
First Friends, Los Angeles	Friendly Class	1924	20	30-60	29	2	15	2nd Older MP
Immanuel Mennonite, Los Angeles	Married People's Class	1920	9	28-45	33		21	2nd Older MP
First Church of the Nazarene, Los Angeles	Ennes Class	1929	7	22-43	64	0	45	YMP Class
Florence Ave. United Presbyterian, L. A.	Co-Workers' Class	1934	13	25-45	50	0	25	2nd Older MP
First Evangelical, Ontario	Cheery Circle Bible Cl.	1924	15	20-50	24	2	8	2nd Older MP
Holt Ave. M. E. (South) Pomona	Home Builders' Bible Cl.	1928	32-42	19	0	10	10	2nd Older MP
Friends Community, Ramona Park	YMP Study Group	1935	8	30-40	8	0		2nd Older MP
Church of Christ, Redlands	Young Married People	1933		18-38	40	4	24	YMP Class

1 "Bring Two Along"

## DENOMINATIONS WITH FEW GROUPS (Contd.)

United Brethren in Christ, Riverside .....	COJOC <sup>1</sup>	1930	4	20-33	16	1	10	YMP Class
United Presbyterian, San Diego .....	Kappa Sigma Gamma <sup>2</sup>	1933	7	19-40	33	6	17	YMP Class
Spurgeon Memorial M. E. (So.) Santa Ana .....	Kingdom Builders	1926	10	24-40	45	0	20	2nd Older MP
First United Presbyterian, Santa Ana .....	Hoysters	1926	10	23-38	40	0	20	2nd Older MP
Church of the Nazarene, Santa Monica .....	"99" Class	1932	10	22-45	50	7	25	2nd Older MP
Brethren in Christ, Upland .....	Emmanuel Bible Class	1928	5	25-38	41	15	25	Young Adult
First Mennonite, Upland .....	YMP Class	1932	6	25-35	35	0	22	YMP Class
Church of the Nazarene, Upland .....	Homemakers	1935	3	20-30	12	0	7	YMP Class
United Brethren, Whittier .....	Altruistic Class	1926	6	25-35	27	3	15	YMP Class
East Whittier Friends .....		1930		23-36	25	2	18	YMP Class

1 Companions Of Jesus Our Companion

2 K(nox) S(abbath) C(lass)—Gamma is the third letter in the Greek alphabet.





## F. VITA

George Gleason was born at Manchester, Massachusetts, March 8, 1875.

1893—Graduated from Haverhill, Mass., High School.

1897—Graduated A. B. Harvard University.

1898—Received M. A. Harvard University.

1897-1901—Served one year in Y M C A work at Harvard University, and two years among preparatory schools in eastern United States and Canada, and one year in the city Y M C A at Philadelphia, Pa.

1901-1919—Y M C A Foreign Department secretary assigned to Osaka, Japan. Special experience in educational work, community service, Bible teaching and in army hut work in Manchuria and Siberia.

1919-1922—Lecturing in the United States in the interests of the foreign work of the Y M C A.

1922-1924—Part-time secretary, Southern California Committee for a research study of Orientals on the Pacific Coast, directed by Dr. Robert E. Park of Chicago University.

1922-1934—Associate Secretary, Y M C A, Los Angeles.

1930-1931—Eight months leave of absence for a tour around the world.

1931-1935—A year and a half of graduate study at Teachers College and Union Seminary, New York City. Summer classes at University of Southern California.

1935—Research among the Protestant Churches of Southern California.

1936—Visit to South America, and study and writing at Teachers College, Columbia University.

## WRITINGS

*Books:*

*What Shall I Think of Japan?* New York, The Macmillan Company, 1921.

Five brief Bible study courses in the New Testament.

Twelve brief English conversation courses, written or edited. Osaka, Japan, Y M C A, 1908-1918.

*Pamphlets:*

*Young Men's Manual.* Los Angeles, California, State Y M C A, 1928.

Collaborated in the preparation of thirteen guides for church young married people's groups, all published privately in Los Angeles, 1934.

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